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XXXIV

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

The Clan Settlement. The Family Compound. The Section-head (Yi-zut-kyema). *The* Ten'dan'. *The Territorial Ruler*

621 ●613 THE constitution of a Talense *tey* is identical with that of the Nankanse. The *tey* (Nankane *teya*) is divided into sections, all the inhabitants of which trace descent from a common ancestor, but each, again, has, as its own more intimate ancestral spirit, a less remote ancestor, from which that particular section takes its name and to whom 'section-', as opposed to '*tey*-', sacrifices, are offered. A section is *yi-zug* (Nankane *yi-zuo*). A section-head is *Yi-zug-kpwem* (Nankane *yi-zuo kyema*).

At Tongo there are four sections, known as (*a*) Pusega, (*b*) Guŋa, (*c*) Korega, (*d*) Seug. The post of section-head of Pusega was vacant; as 'the funeral custom of the late *yi-zut-kpwem* had not yet been held, his successor could not be appointed'.

The section-head of Guŋa is *Sayezaa* (my informant, see Fig. 63); of Korega, a certain *Basego*; of Seug, vacant, for the same reason as (*a*).

613 [76] *Election of New Section-head.* Heads of other sections met and consulted the *bay* (Nankane *baga*) to find out why the late head of the section had died. The soothsayer might say, 'It was because he did not give one of the cows, *sull* (Nankane, *sulle*), which he received for his eldest daughter, to his ancestor.' After the funeral custom his successor was appointed. 'The man who had the right to take the deceased's *bagere* (here ancestral shrine) was the one to succeed. This man was already known; the *bay* was only consulted about the funeral.'

The successor to the section-head was the 'senior' man in that section, but he was not necessarily the oldest: e.g. *A* marries a wife, *C*, by whom he has three sons, *D*, *E*, *F*, and three grandsons *G*, *H*, *I*, sons of *D*, *E*, and *F*; *A*, in his old age, marries a young wife, *B*, by whom he has a son, *J*. This son may be twenty years or more younger than *G*, *H*, *I*, but if *A*'s brothers are all dead and also *D*, *E*, and *F*, then *J* will become section head before *G*, *H*, or *I*, 'because *G*, *H*, and *I* call *J* father.'[1]

613 178 The tendency here, as almost everywhere in the Northern Territories, is for these hereditary section-leaders, who were really the back-

[1] See p. 279 [i.e. reference to similar practice among the Nankanse-A] [p. 346]

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bone of the old Native Administration, to be superseded and pushed aside by ambitious and often unscrupulous upstarts who bid for these minor posts before the Chief in whose patronage they lie; the almost inevitable result is that, having obtained the office, they are induced to regard it chiefly as a means of enabling them to recoup themselves for the expenses which they have incurred in securing the post.

The Family Compounds: These are round, flat-roofed, scattered, and, as far as I could see, in other respects similar to those already described.[1]

The Ten'dan': Among the Talense an investigation into the former status and rights of this official resulted in the confirmation of the answers already given to similar enquiries made elsewhere.[1] The following notes may therefore be regarded as supplementary to what has previously been written concerning these individuals, and as being, for the main part, applicable to *Ten'dama* in general, and not only among the Talense.

Duties of Ten'dan': (*a*) He takes a certain part in funeral customs; this will be dealt with under that heading. (*b*) He purifies the land from defilement of blood. 'The Earth does not wish any one to die, except God's death (*Yin-ku*); *kun kpemere*, a violent death, is a taboo of the land (*tey*), so if any one fights and spills blood on the land, it has to be purified (*man tey*). The one who causes the wound has to bring a fowl and a goat, if a person was actually killed, and a cow for the Chief. The sacrifice is made at the compound of the *Ten'dan'*, not where the blood fell. I will assemble all my people and send to tell the Chief that I am purifying the land. If those who had shed the blood were from the Chief's compound, he will send representatives, not otherwise. If the guilty person refuses to purify the land, I will speak and he will die. Even if I do not speak, the land will fight him, that is, permit a snake to bite him or give him head-ache or belly-ache.'

Words Spoken at the Ceremony: 'I will call my father and say: "Listen, they fight on your land, and give head wounds, and blood comes forth. Blood flowed and wet you, so they have brought flour, fowls, and a goat to give you." When I have spoken thus, I make the sacrifice on a heap of soil which I scrape together.'

If any one raises the war cry *kab tagulk* (Nankane, *kasega*) without a cause, he must sacrifice to the land. If any one sells another person, he must purify the land, giving a cow or sheep. 'The land owns the people, that is why a sacrifice is made to her.'

Purification of the Land when Some One is Sold: When a person sells

[1] [The sections of the source containing this material were not processed.--Analyst]

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178 formerly, and the social cleavages symbolized in this habit are no longer
184 so drastic as before. On the other hand, when the Golibdaana, in his overweening conceit, tried to copy the dress and the court procedure of
178 a Mampuru chief, there was wide indignation. The Chief of Tongo,
184 with whom he thus sought to equate himself, protested with such vigour
626 to the District Commissioner that the latter ordered the Golibdaana to stop his new practices. A man of enormous wealth and great power failed to get away with an innovation prepared with extravagant expense, because it ran counter to the politico-ritual structure of the society. He would never, incidentally, have dared to attempt this in former times, or, for that matter, have had the motive to do so. His behaviour is due to the arrogance of newly acquired wealth and power. But Tale institutions are still too strongly integrated to give way to such blatant subversion.

613 The notions of the continuity, persistence, and stability of their culture and social organization, so vital for the Tale outlook on life, have their roots in the lineage system. The whole social system of the Tallensi hinges on their lineage system with its religious counterpart, an elaborate ancestor cult. Unbroken continuity of descent, persistence of self-identical corporate units, stability of settlement—these are the intrinsic characteristics of the Tale lineage system. It requires the assumption, which the ancestor cult places beyond question, that the social structure of to-day is the same as it was in the past.

173 The Tallensi, therefore, have no history in the sense of a body of
773 authentic records of past events. The memories and reminiscences of
578 the old men are parts of their biographies and never contribute to the building up of a body of socially preserved history. Their myths and legends are one means of rationalizing and defining the structural relationships of group to group or the pattern of their institutions. Some of them have perhaps been built up around events which actually occurred and people who actually lived. It is, for example, quite probable that the Namoos actually came from Mampurugu originally, and that Mosuor really lived. The ancestor cult, the settled life, and the whole cultural idiom of the Tallensi lend support to such an inference, but there is no objective evidence. Tale myths and legends counterfeit history; they do not document it. They are a part of Tale social philosophy, projected into the past because the people think of their social order as continuous and persistent, handed down from generation to generation. A myth or a legend postulates a beginning for what has existed thus ever since. Even in our civilization naïve philosophers try to understand their society by similar devices. In the elaborately differentiated structure of Tale society there are regions of high tension where groups are coupled together in polar opposition and regions of low tension where the units of structure are articulated in complementary relations to one another. The myths epitomize the factors which differentiate one group from another. The greater the differentiation at any point the more elaborate is the legend. Hence we find the most definitive and conspicuous legend, that of Mosuor, associated with the relationship of greatest tension, that of the Namoos to the Talis. We find, also, that the emphasis of a myth is on the relationships which most precisely define the structural position

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CHAPTER III

PARADIGM OF THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

613 182 TALE society is built up round the lineage system. It is no exaggeration to say that every sociological problem presented by the Tallensi hinges on the lineage system. It is the skeleton of their social structure, the bony framework which shapes their body politic; it guides their economic life and moulds their ritual ideas and values. The social life of the Tallensi cannot be understood without a knowledge of the principles that govern their lineage organization.

128 These principles will be briefly and formally stated in the present chapter. This will give us a paradigm by which to orient our analysis. Something of this sort, though less systematic and abstract, is in the mind's eye of every well-informed native when he discusses the structure of his society or takes his part in public affairs. The schematic analysis given here will be amplified in later chapters and some repetition is therefore unavoidable. In studying a society of this type we cannot avoid traversing the same ground repeatedly from different directions. For the same basic units, relations, and principles of structure lie behind all forms of association and all organized social activities.

A preliminary bird's-eye view of the lineage system is important, also, in another respect. A lineage always functions as a whole. Whenever a lineage emerges in social action it does so as a product of its component parts and of the relations between them; when a part of a lineage emerges in social action it does so relatively to other parts of it and to the whole. Anyone wishing to understand the way a Tale lineage functions must think of it as a field system, in which the behaviour of the part is regulated by its relation to the whole and the behaviour of the whole is a product of the relations of the parts.

613 From the Tale point of view a lineage is an association of people of both sexes comprising all the known descendants by a known genealogy of a single known and named ancestor in an unbroken male line. From the sociologist's point of view it is an association of people of both sexes comprising all the recognized descendants by an accepted genealogy of a single named ancestor in a putatively continuous male line. It is, in other words, a strictly unilineal, agnatic descent group.

Lineages vary in *span* proportionately to the number of generations accepted as having intervened between their living members and the founding ancestor from whom they trace their descent. The lineage of minimum span, which we shall call the minimal lineage, consists of the children of one father. The lineage of maximum span, which we shall call the maximal lineage, is the lineage of widest span to which any of its members belongs. It consists of all the descendants in the male line of the remotest common patrilineal ancestor known to the members of the lineage. Whenever we speak of a lineage without qualification to indicate its span, we use the term in the generalized sense of a lineage of any span

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and any order of segmentation. What is meant by *order of segmentation* is defined below. 613

The number of antecedent generations reckoned to the point of convergent ascent varies slightly from one maximal lineage to another in Taleland. It is, as will be clearer later, proportional to, and an index of, the range of segmentary differentation in the existing maximal lineage. Eight to ten ascendant generations are usually reckoned between contemporary minimal lineages and the founding ancestor of the maximal lineage of which they are part. Genealogies are not remembered for their own sake by the Tallensi. They are relevant, primarily, as the mnemonics of the lineage system. They are bound up with the institutions which demonstrate and make overt the formal unity, or the internal differentiation of a lineage. Among the social events in which this occurs most conspicuously and frequently are sacrifices to ancestor spirits and mortuary and funeral ceremonies. The latter, especially, epitomize the entire social structure and enable one to see precisely how the lineage system is constituted.

All Tale lineages are hierarchically organized between the limits of the minimum span, i.e. the minimal lineage, on the one hand, and the maximum span, i.e. the maximal lineage, on the other. Thus every minimal lineage is a segment of a more inclusive lineage defined by reference to a common grandfather, and this, in turn, is a segment of a still wider lineage defined by reference to a common great-grandfather; and so on, until the limit is reached—the maximal lineage, defined by reference to the remotest agnatic ancestor of the group. But a minimal lineage crystallizes out, as we shall see, only on the death of its founder. Until then it is submerged in a wider lineage.

Within a lineage of whatever span each grade of segmentation is functionally significant. Each segment has its focus of unity, and an index of its corporate identity, in the ancestor by reference to whom it is differentiated from other segments of the same order in the hierarchically organized set of lineages. Sacrifices to the shrine of this ancestor require the presence of representatives of every segment of the next lower order; and this rule applies to all corporate action of a ceremonial or jural kind of any lineage. This is the fundamental rule of the lineage organization.

The solidarity of a lineage is a function of the co-operation of its major segments, i.e. the segments of the highest order. In matters that concern the lineage as a whole, and in situations which express its corporate unity, members of the lineage co-operate as representatives of its major segments. The lesser segments constituting each major segment receive explicit recognition only in relation to the major segment. They emerge, then, as major segments of a major segment, and their segments, again, emerge only in relation to them; and so on down to the minimal segments. In these affairs of common concern, rights and duties, privileges and obligations are distributed equally amongst the major segments of a lineage. This emphasizes their equality of status.

A lineage of any span emerges in any of its activities as a system of aliquot parts, not as a mere collection of individuals of common ancestry. It represents an equilibrium, maintained by the relations between its

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613 constituent parts. The simplest way of achieving this is for its internal differentiation into segments to be of a limited and balanced kind. That is why only the first order of segmentation, a division into major segments, is recognized in the corporate activities of a lineage. In Tale theory the source of this primary segmentation of the lineage is the minimal lineage, in which a group of brothers (two or more) are differentiated from one another as individuals each of whom is the potential founder of a new lineage, but are united through their common father. A pair of brothers by the same father (*sunzɔp*, sing. *sunzɔ*) are the potential originators of a pair of major segments of the lineage deriving from their father. So all major segments of a lineage of any span are visualized as being derived from brothers, sons of the lineage founder, and are described as *sunzɔp* to one another. Their lineage ties, summed up in the concept *sunzɔt* (brotherhood), are thought of as being founded on, and derived from, the ties that hold between brothers. By the rule of exogamy women members marry out of the lineage, so they do not contribute to its perpetuation and do not affect its organization.

613 595 [591] The growing-point of the lineage, it will be seen, is the family. It is always patrilocal; ideally, it is also polygynous. Thus children of the same man are differentiated from one another as children of different mothers. This provides a further criterion of differentiation within the lineage. Like the sons of different mothers and the same father, segments of a lineage may, in certain situations, be distinguished from one another by reference to their different progenitrices. In other situations, like the sons of one mother, segments of a lineage may be grouped together by reference to a common progenitrix.

613 A maximal lineage cannot, by definition, have any *sunzɔp* identified strictly in terms of common agnatic descent. If it had it would be a segment of a more inclusive lineage. The ancestor who founded it must be unique, in retrospect. As we have seen, he may be accounted for by a myth; but his unique place in the genealogical tree can sometimes be naturalistically explained. If the formation of recent lineage segments is studied, it can be seen that segments sometimes disappear, owing to the extinction of a branch of the lineage. When this happens, the surviving segments reach a new equilibrium. The defunct collateral line is forgotten in due course, together with its genealogy; for this no longer has any structural significance. Thus an existing maximal lineage may be merely the surviving segment of what might have been a wider maximal lineage.

It is characteristic of Tale social organization, however, that maximal lineages do often have *sunzɔp*, either through ties of clanship, or by incorporating, or being joined to, lineages not strictly of the same agnatic descent.

A lineage is a temporal system. Continuity in time is its fundamental quality. Its constitution and dimensions at a given time represent a phase of a process which, as the natives see it, has been going on in exactly the same way from the beginning of their social order and is continuing into the future. The contemporary phase of a lineage is more than a product of its past; it embodies all the significant changes that have occurred in it

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throughout its past; and it is, at the same time, the embryo of its future organization. A Tale lineage cannot be dissociated from its temporal extension.

A maximal lineage is fixed with reference to its founding ancestor, who is the focus of its unity and the symbol of its corporate identity. From time to time its unity and identity become explicit in the common cult of this ancestor and in the regulation of intra-lineage relations which hinges on it. The ancestor cult is the calculus of the lineage system, the mechanism by means of which the progressive internal differentiation of a lineage is ordered and is fitted into the existing structure. It is also the principal ideological bulwark of the lineage organization.

Every maximal lineage is continually expanding and proliferating through the fission of its minor segments. But though its span is thus constantly increasing, its form does not alter. It has a fixed centre and a fixed locus we might say. In theory it always remains the same lineage, and new maximal lineages cannot arise through the splitting up of an existing maximal lineage. It is a unit of common agnatic descent, and no branch of it can ever repudiate this. In theory ties of descent can never lapse. A maximal lineage is also an exogamous unit, and no branch of it can contract out of this bond.

To the contemporary observer the Tale lineage system appears as a stable and finally established factor of the constituted social structure, the ground plan of which was laid down in the distant past by processes which are still going on. In any maximal lineage, therefore, the fission of minor segments does not alter the equilibrium of the major segments at any given time. Changes in minimal lineages, in fact, cannot alter the equilibrium of any segment greater than the minimal. This is reflected in the naming of lineages and their segments. Every lineage is named after its founder, and as long as a lineage persists it bears the same name. Thus the names of segments greater than the minimal may be regarded as fixed once for all. A lineage is called the 'children (*biis*) of so-and-so' or 'the house (*yir*) or people of the house (*yidem*) of so-and-so'. These ways of denoting a lineage are interchangeable. A lineage may also be described as a 'room' (*dug*) of a superordinate lineage. This indicates that it is being thought of as a segment of the latter.

This formal analysis will be more easily understood from the diagram which follows. It shows, in a simplified way, the structure of a major segment of a maximal lineage which is assumed to have only two major segments. The major segment not included must be homologous with the major segment shown here since a lineage necessarily divides into segments of equal order. Similarly, the relations of the two major segments of our hypothetical maximal lineage to each other are repeated, at a lower order of segmentation, in the relations of the major segments of each major segment to one another. In the diagram the relations of subsegments X and Y to each other, within the framework of Major Segment I, are identical in form with those of Major Segment I and its brother (*sunzo*) segment, Major Segment II, and this rule holds for every subsequent order of segmentation. We shall later on study the interests, rights, and obligations associated with such an ordered series

Diagram illustrating the Paradigm of the Lineage System

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of homologous inter-segment relations, and see, then, how they vary in kind and are graded in precision.

If we describe a major segment of a maximal lineage as a primary segment, then segments of the order of X and Y in the diagram can be called secondary segments, and Y is split into two subsegments (tertiary segments) of the next lower order V and W. These have, respectively, two (*g* and *h*+*i*) and three (*k*+*l*, *m*, and *n*+*o*+*p*) segments of still lower order; and some of these consist, as the diagram shows, of subordinate segments of the lowest order, i.e. minimal segments. X has no segments co-ordinate with V and W, but has four segments of the next lower order (*a*+*b*, *c*, *d*+*e*, and *f*), some of which are subdivided into minimal segments.

These are all various ways of grouping the same thirty-five males in a set of lineages of common agnatic descent. Women members are excluded from the diagram for the reason previously stated. In some situations each grouping emerges as a lineage in its own right; in others it acts as a segment of a lineage of higher order. When, for example, the 'house' (*yir*) of F.VI.1 (i.e. *a*+*b*) assembles to sacrifice to his spirit, it acts as a self-contained corporate unit, a lineage. Both its segments, *a* and *b*, must be represented and the animal sacrificed is divided equally between them. The portion given to *a* is then equally shared, again, between F.VIII.1 and his brother's son F.IX.2—i.e. the two nascent segments of the house of F.VII.1. Actually, during the lifetime of F.VII.2, the head of the house of F.VI.1, *a* remains only a potential lineage, submerged in *a*+*b*.

The same rule holds for the higher orders of segmentation. The house of F.VI.1 is a segment—a 'room' (*dug*)—of the house of F.V.1—i.e. of the lineage X. When sacrifice is made to F.V.1, all the four segments of X must be represented and the animal slaughtered is divided equally amongst them, to be redistributed by each segment amongst its subsegments. F.VII.2 is head of lineage *a*+*b* and sacrifices on their behalf to their immediate founder F.VI.1. He is also head of X sacrificing, on behalf of all its four segments, to F.V.1 and F.IV.1.

The minimum differentiation of X requires the recognition of the same four segments of equal status, whether F.IV.1 or F.V.1 be considered as the focus of the lineage, since there are no intermediate segments derived from F.IV.1. Contrast lineage Y, the minimal differentiation of which recognizes two segments of a higher order than the four which constitute X—i.e. of an intermediate order between the segments derived from F.III.1 (X and Y) and those derived from F.V.1, 2, and 3. The constitution of lineage X has the same form as that of the whole lineage, the agnatic posterity of F.III.1, of which it is a major segment.

In lineages thus constituted an ancestor who has no significance as a focus of differentiation from other co-ordinate lineages loses his structural relevance and has no distinct ancestor-shrine. He is merged with a predecessor who still symbolizes the focus of differentiation of the lineage, and often no doubt fades into oblivion. In this way genealogies get telescoped and the ranking of structurally insignificant ancestors gets confused. Thus Major Segment I would probably be named the house of F.I.1 after the ancestor who symbolizes their differentiation from the co-ordinate major segment derived from his 'brother', F.I.2. The

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613 tendency is to retain the ancestor to whose generation the fission of the segments can be most appropriately attributed. The naming, here, would fit in with the relations of the two major segments as representing the primary differentiation of the maximal lineage one generation nearer than the founding ancestor. Though F.II.1 and F.III.1 are still invoked in sacrifices, their order of succession tends to be confused. F.II.1 will lapse more easily than F.III.1, who will be remembered as the actual father of F.IV.1 and F.IV.2.

Similarly, lineage X will be described as the house of F.IV.1 when its status as a major segment of the house of F.I.1, co-ordinate with Y, is the main issue. But members of its constituent segments might also describe themselves collectively as the house of F.V.1, after the most recent ancestor from whom their lines of descent diverge, when stressing their connexion as 'rooms' of a single lineage. Which nomenclature is used depends on the situation and on the range of the lineage concerned in it.

These usages illustrate again the natives' inveterate habit of naming social units by contraposition. They explain, also, why no historical validity can be attached to their genealogies, beyond the time of their great-grandfathers. A genealogy maps out a particular set of lineage relations; it is not a true record. Thus it is impossible to ascertain, as it is from the Tale point of view irrelevant to ask, whether or not any ancestors intervened between the founder of a maximal lineage such as is here sketched and the originators of its existing major segments. If there were any, it is quite possible that they have been dropped from the genealogy because they are redundant, in terms of the structure of the lineage. Similarly, the ancestor whose name is preserved as the founder of the maximal lineage may have been preceded by others whose names have lapsed from tradition for the same reason.

Lineages of the same order of segmentation are not all of equal span. Though lineage span and order of segmentation overlap, they are not interchangeable categories. Lineage *c*—the house of F.VI.2—is co-ordinate with (i.e. of the same order of segmentation as) lineage *a*+*b*—the house of F.VI.1—but of a lesser span. Lineage X, similarly, has a lesser span than lineage Y. The span of a lineage is a measure of its internal differentiation, whereas its order of segmentation defines its relations, as a corporate unit, with other units of a like sort.

The distinction is important in the conduct of lineage and community affairs. Co-ordinate segments are brothers (*sunzɔp*) to one another, irrespective of span; but a lineage of small span is more closely integrated than one of large span. Thus the major segments of our diagrammatic maximal lineage are *sunzɔp*, being descended, as it is thought, from a pair of brothers by the same father; so are X and Y; so are V and W; so are the four constituent segments of X, the two constituent segments of V, and the three constituent segments of W; and the same rule holds for the lesser lineages down to a pair of brothers, like lineage *c*, who are also *sunzɔp*.

It is evident that brothers (*sunzɔp*) can be graded according to their genealogical distance from one another. The natives say '*ti a ba yɛni*

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biis—we are the children of one father', when they want to stress recent common ancestry, or '*ti a yaab yɛni biis*—we are the children of one ancestor', whenever they emphasize remote common ancestry. The same contrast is expressed in the appellations *dug* (room) and *yir* (house). Members of lineage V, for example, will speak of themselves as *dugdɛm* (members of one room) by contrast with members of lineage W, whom they would describe as *ti yidɛm* (people of our house). Members of X will say 'We, the children of so and so (F.IV.1), are four rooms', but they will speak of themselves as *dugdɛm* in contrast to Y, who would be called their *yidɛm*, e.g. at funeral ceremonies. Thus the segments of X or of Y are closer *sunzɔp* than are X and Y, which, again, are closer *sunzɔp* than are the major segments of the maximal lineage. A specially close tie is acknowledged also between lineages of common agnatic ancestry which have a common ancestress. Thus, if F.V.1 had three wives, from whom have sprung, respectively, segments $a+b$ and c, $d+e$, and f, then the first two segments regard each other as closer *sunzɔp* than either of the other two.

Genealogical distance and the tie of brotherhood (*sunzɔt*) are most palpable in situations which bring out the structural equilibrium of the set of lineages. When, for instance, a funeral occurs in lineage g, contributions of cooked food will be made by the *sunzɔp* as follows: by the head of $h+i$, the closest *sunzɔ* segment, on behalf of that segment; by the head of W on behalf of the whole lineage, not by its constituent segments, the contribution being given to its *sunzɔ* V, not to the segment g; and by the head of X, if it is the funeral of an elder, on behalf of the whole of X, when the recipient unit is considered to be Y, not g. If the other half of the maximal lineage, Major Segment II, sends a contribution, it will be given by the head of the segment on behalf of the whole unit as an obligation owed to the *sunzɔ* segment, the house of F.I.1. Cooked food, beer, and the meat of ceremonially slaughtered animals are distributed according to the same scale of genealogical distance, and the allocation of ritual duties, though less strictly regulated, depends on it, too. Hence any members of W who may be present at the funeral are regarded as representing W, however many segments of W they may individually represent. They are entitled only to those portions of food, beer, and meat which are the due share of W. An identical share can be claimed by members of X who may be present, whether they come from one of its segments or from all; and the same holds for the major segments of the maximal lineage. *Sunzɔt* here implies duties and privileges vested in the lineage as a corporate unit and exercised on its behalf by any representatives of that unit in relation to other units of a like sort.

There are many other institutions and situations in which the tie of *sunzɔt* operates in the same way and receives precise and formal recognition according to the same rules. It operates thus in all corporate actions and in relation to all corporate interests of a lineage. It dictates the manner in which every activity associating people in groups is organized. Hoeing and building teams organize their work broadly along the lines of the lineage structure and distribute the food they receive in reward in accordance with it. In a hunting party lineage *sunzɔp* have the right to

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613 'pull out' (*fɔ*) a foreleg of any animal killed by a member of a *sunzɔ* lineage. But for the present we are concerned only with the paradigm of the lineage system, a mere definition, though necessarily a somewhat lengthy one, of the fundamental concept of Tale social organization. The principal interests which direct the life and activities of a lineage, the critical jural norms which regulate the relations of its members and subdivisions to one another, the chief doctrines, myths, ceremonial usages, and ritual observances in which its structure is conceptualized and its existence and coherence invested with value for its members, will be considered at later stages of our inquiry.

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The Chain of Sub-clans

[618] [613] Thus came into being this chain of four patrilineal sub-clans (Tongo, Yamələg, Sie, and Biuk), each the skeleton of a community. From these primary nuclei colonies have continually hived off to settle in neighbouring areas, particularly at Gbambee, Gorogo, Ba'ari, Woo, and Datɔk. Each sub-clan is itself a composite system of lineages: authentic lineages constituted by the direct line of agnatic descent from the clan founder, Mosuor; attached lineages, linked to these usually by the dogma of [611] sister-descent; and assimilated lineages. The attached lineages are identified as *ti tau biis*—our sister's children—descendants in the direct male line of a female member of one of the authentic lineages. The stereotyped formula attributes the origin of such a lineage either to a sister's son (*ahɔŋ*) who came to live in his mother's brother's (*ahɔb*)

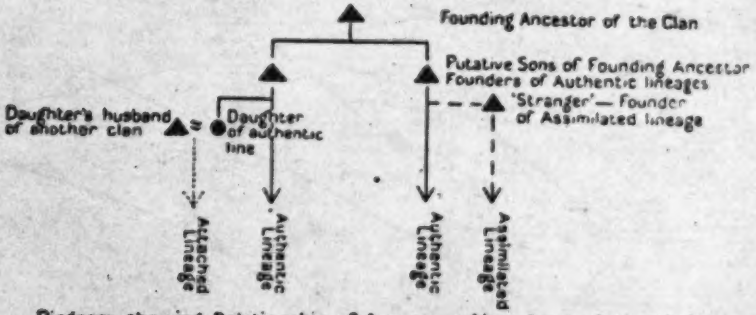

Diagram showing Relationship of Accessory Lineages to Authentic Line

[586] community, or to a sister who was divorced by her husband by the irrevocable procedure of blowing ash on her (*pɛbh*), and returned to the shelter of her parental home with her children. By this form of divorce a man renounces his rights in his children, who henceforth become members of their maternal lineage, as if they had been illegitimately begotten by a lover. The agnatic posterity of such children, as of any spinster's son, becomes a lineage attached to that of their ancestor's mother.

We shall call these 'attached lineages' because they are linked to the authentic lineages by actual or putative cognatic ties. An attached lineage maintains its continuity and distinctness, like any other lineage, even if its patrilineal progenitor is alleged to have repudiated its ancestress and his own progeny.

The existence of the assimilated lineages is often traced to an ancestor who was a 'kinsman' (*mabii*) accompanying the founder of the authentic lineage when he first arrived. Of some such lineages, however, it is whispered that they sprang from slaves of the authentic lineage with which they are connected, or from foreign refugees who sought their protection. The term used for these lineages is intended to convey that they are incorporated in the sub-clan by virtue of their dependence on and participation in the life of an authentic lineage. We shall also describe these two kinds of lineages collectively as accessory lineages.

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613 ● 618x 574

This summary statement follows closely the formulations of the Tallensi themselves. They normally think of a lineage, a set of lineages, or a community, as a unit in relation to other units of a like sort, irrespective of its internal differentiation. Thus, Tongo people say: '*Tam ni Yamələgdɔm ni Siedɔm ni Biukdɔm a la yaab yɛni biis*—We and the people of Yamələg, and the people of Sie and the people of Biuk are the children of one ancestor.' The place-name serves to designate the social group. Once, at Sie, some young men from Tongo, members of an assimilated lineage, called on me. 'We've only come on a visit', they said, '*daya ti mabiis n a Siedɔm*?—Are not these people of Sie our kinsfolk?'

Such intercourse is constant amongst the three Talni-speaking branches of Mosuor's posterity (*tu'u*). Biuk, both because of its fusion with the Gəris and its geographical location, is somewhat isolated from regular contact with its Talni-speaking clansmen. But the ties which control this voluntary fraternization emerge more precisely in a number of critical norms and institutions.

The Critical Norms of Clanship

618x 582

Most important of these is the rule of exogamy. Marriage is unconditionally prohibited between the four branches of Mosuor's posterity—i.e. between members of the authentic lineages of Tongo, Yamələg, Sie, and Biuk. The prohibition extends to the assimilated lineages as well, but not to all attached lineages, though the natives state it as if it applied to the entire sub-clan. They regard it as the inevitable corollary of their common ancestry. It is, therefore, the widest extension of the rule which prohibits marriage within the agnatic lineage. I discovered only one instance of the transgression of this rule at Tongo, and this occurred in abnormal circumstances.

587 618x

A second critical norm always cited is: '*ti diit taaba pakoya*—We marry one another's widows.' A Tongo man has the right to seek the hand of the widow of a Yamələg, a Sie, or a Biuk man; but in actual practice remarriage of widows is restricted by so many other conditions that this leviratic right is mainly significant as an ideological index of clanship. It is the correlative of the rule of exogamy and, like it, the widest extension of a right which holds primarily within the lineage. Occasionally this right is exercised in its widest sense. The Chief of Tongo, for example, has availed himself of it to solve the problem of accommodation for himself and his retinue when he is compelled to visit the Administrative Headquarters at Zuarungu. An elderly widow at Biuk is nominally his wife and he may therefore stay in her house without embarrassment. In another case a middle-aged Yamələg widow elected to marry a stalwart young man from Tongo in preference to any of her dead husband's closer kinsmen. It is extremely unlikely that either woman would have been permitted to marry so distant an agnate of her dead husband if she were still capable of child-bearing. Nevertheless, it is an essential consequence of the leviratic right that if a man from one of the sub-clans should succeed in marrying a young widow of a member of another, no reprisals could be publicly undertaken against him, whereas anyone outside the range of clanship would be courting armed vengeance by such an act.

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the paramount moral values of the Namoos. The oath a Namoo swears by his father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells to rebut an accusation or assert his honesty is evidence of this.

The natives think of these rules as coeval with their social order. They are axioms of conduct, which men accept without questioning as they accept the fact that one is born a Namoo. Since they are binding on and restricted to the patrilineal line of descent, these avoidances serve to express the ultimate and unconditional validity of agnatic descent, through which the individual's place in a corporate unit is irrevocably fixed at birth, and by which his whole social and spiritual destiny is largely controlled. Through ignorance or stupidity, irreverence or lack of self-control, individuals sometimes, though very rarely, break these taboos. Such lapses will bring down mystical retribution on the sinner's head; that is his affair. They cannot impair the intrinsic validity of these rules or undermine their obligatory character.

It would be inconceivable for a Namoo to flout the taboo of the goatskin loin-cover for the dead. To do so would be a sacrilege so gratuitous and so lunatic as to lie beyond the bounds of sane human behaviour. Actually a situation in which such a sacrilege would be possible would never occur, for the simple reason that a death is an affair of the clan. The clan elders conduct all mortuary and funeral ceremonies, and the inviolability of the prescribed ritual is thus safeguarded by the mechanics of its performance.

It is otherwise with the fowl taboo. This too the natives consider to be something so fundamental and axiomatic that it requires no sanction against possible breach except by accident. The danger of a breach occurs only with children. The first-born child who eats a fowl or even a hen's egg, either through inadvertence, through greed, or through childish recklessness, may sink into a decline (*u burəmrəme*), or at the least will break out in a rash on the head (*u zug koorəme*). But such a transgression by a child is venial, and the antidote is simple. The child is given an infusion of fowl droppings in water to drink which makes him vomit and so purges him.

Observation and questioning show that breaches of this taboo are as rare as the natives assert them to be. I have often seen a first-born man (*nɔ-kihir*, pl. *-kihib*, one who taboos the fowl) sacrificing fowls to his ancestor spirits and leaving them to others to consume. After such a rite a *nɔ-kihir* always washes his hands carefully lest he contaminate his food at the next meal with the blood of the fowl. Not only do parents, siblings, and other relatives take care to prevent children from breaking the taboo, but the children who have to observe it have a horror of doing so. By the time they are five or six years old children will tell an inquirer with great emphasis, 'I am an eldest child, and I don't eat fowl'. Though they do not know the myth that accounts for the taboo, they appreciate its obligatory character.

We have spoken of these taboos as symbols of moral values because, though binding on all Namoos, they do not imply specific ties either political or ceremonial, and are obligatory on individuals. Their observance is in the last resort a matter of conscience and belief. In the widest

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577 784 social setting they identify Namoo communities by contraposition with non-Namoo neighbours. The phrase 'we of the Mampuru stock' merely labels a category of clans. It becomes a coefficient of conduct for the individual within the context of clanship, local, and community ties.

●613 428 627 The dispute over the succession to the custody of the shrine (*bɔyar*) of the founding ancestor of Bɔyada biis at Tongo was a case in point. Saŋgbɔŋ, the son of the deceased custodian, who had been head of Yiyaam biis, one major segment of the lineage, refused to hand the shrine over to Tinta'alam, the oldest living member of the whole lineage. He alleged that the latter's segment (Yidaan biis) were 'sister's children', that is, an attached lineage descended from a Sii man. All the men of Yidaan biis rallied unanimously around Tinta'alam, angry and resentful at this slur on their status. 'If we don't get the *bɔyar*', they explained, 'people will scoff at us, saying that we are the descendants of a slave' (i.e. not the authentic progeny of Mosuor).

The case was argued, with an acrimony which was hard to conceal, before the chief. Saŋgbɔŋ contended that Yidaan biis could not be debarred from taking part in sacrifices to the shrine of Bɔyada, but, as an attached lineage, they had no right to its custody. Tinta'alam, speaking for the whole segment of Yidaan biis, denied this story as a pack of lies, but his opponent refused to abandon his position. At length the chief put the decisive question to the elders who were present. 'What', he asked, 'do the people of Sii taboo?' 'The tortoise (*pakur*), the water tortoise (*miey*), and the crocodile (*bay*)', said one of the elders, 'and they dress their dead in a sheepskin loin-cover (*ba suona pchug*), and do not taboo the fowl.' 'And what about you Namoos?' queried the chief. 'Do you avoid the fowl, or do you not? Do you put a sheepskin loin-cover on the dead?' The elders answered this rhetorical question, 'Of course we taboo the fowl! And we use a goatskin for the dead. When Talis slaughter the sheep to gird their dead we would not even touch the meat.' 'Now,' continued the chief, 'if Yidaan had come to live here with his mother's brother as an acknowledged son of a Sii man, would he have discarded his forefathers' taboos?' 'Neither he nor his descendants', exclaimed the elders with one voice; 'if they had done so they would suffer for it, they would all die out.' And an attached lineage which Saŋgbɔŋ had adduced in support of his case was quoted in proof; for they still retain the taboos of the Talis because their founder had been legitimately and ritually a member of a Talis clan. Moreover, there was the case of Pulieber yidem, the Tongo lineage living at Gorogo, who keep their Namoo taboos. There was a time when they lost many members through death in quick succession, and diviners revealed that this was a retribution for trying to participate in the initiation cult of their Talis kin. The tone and attitude of the elders showed impressively the moral importance to the natives of these taboos. It was common knowledge, they said, that Tinta'alam and all the members of his segment observe the Namoo taboos. Saŋgbɔŋ's story was palpably false. However, to make the decision conclusive and to save it from rankling it was left to an oracle. [787] A fowl was slaughtered with an invocation to the ancestors and the posture in which it died showed which of the disputants was in the right.

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No one was surprised when Tinta'alɔm gained the verdict. Thus the ancestors themselves vouched for the legitimate status of Yidaan biis.

Other Namoo Clans

The most important of the Namoo clans that come within the political orbit of Tongo, though not related to it by ties of clanship, is the contiguous clan of Zoo. A number of Tongo families live on Zoo land, which was not so densely populated as Tongo 50 or 60 years ago and could therefore accommodate some of its overflow population. In the same way, a number of Zoo families have overflowed into the neighbouring locality of Gbambee, where they live among Tongo people. These ecological adjustments are facilitated, though not solely determined, by the structural ties between Zoo and Tongo, and by the fact that both are Namoo settlements. Ten out of the thirty-nine homesteads at Zoo belong to Tongo people, and they are members of all but one of the major segments of Tongo. By contrast, Tongo people are reluctant to move out to vacant parts of Zubiuŋ, where the people, though their neighbours and cognatic kinsfolk, are Talis in their ritual beliefs and practices. In recent years only one Tongo man has done this as a temporary measure.

The people of Zoo (Zoodɛm) comprise two maximal lineages. One of these, Zoo proper, is a maximal lineage of three segments, to one of which is attached a 'sister's son's' lineage. Their founding ancestor, Yikpɛmdaan, is said to have been a kinsman (*mabii*) of Mosuor, whom he accompanied from Mampurugu. As Zoodɛm marry any of the descendants of Mosuor, the fiction of original kinship (*mabiirɔt*) here emphasizes the cultural and political solidarity of the two groups, not a genealogical connexion.

Living side by side with Zoodɛm proper (Yikpɛmdaan biis) is another maximal lineage known as Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm. These two maximal lineages exclude one another from the cults of their respective founding ancestors and from the ritual observances connected with them. Indeed, Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm are affiliated to the Talis by ritual observance and cult. Nevertheless, Zoodɛm proper and Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm have all the ties of clanship that hold between constituent lineages of the same clan who consider themselves to be *sunzɔp*. The explanation they give is that 'it is because we live together side by side (*tin kab ziin ni taaba la zugu*)'. Here clanship is attributed to local coalescence. These clanship ties are shown in all ceremonial matters that concern either of the lineages as well as in their co-operative enterprises. Though they do not take part in the esoteric ritual of one another's funeral ceremonies, they act as *sunzɔp* to one another in the public and exoteric phases of the ceremonies. If a party of Zoodɛm proper set out to pay their respects to a deceased relative-in-law, they will always be supported by some young men from Zoo-Yiraaŋdɛm; and if a Zoo-Yiraaŋ man is summoned to take a working party to help his father-in-law, he will always be accompanied by a few young men of the other lineage.

Zoo-Yiraaŋ is linked by ties of clanship to one of the component maximal lineages of Zubiuŋ.[1] Zoodɛm proper have no ties of clanship with Zubiuŋ or with any other clan. Yet they are often described as 'our

[1] See ch. VI.

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ing the installation or the funeral of a tendaana, both receive sacrifices. But the *Bɔyar*, like its homologue among the Namoos, is more precisely a symbol of the continuity and perpetuity of the clan and its constituent lineages. It is more explicitly a focus of that solidarity of the clan or the lineage which is deemed to follow automatically from the fact of their common agnatic descent. The Earth, on the other hand, though its cult is also intrinsically bound up with the agnatic line, stands rather for the common interests and common values embodied in the customary norms and sanctions of collective life.

It is significant, however, that the *Bɔyar* cult and the Earth cult, both of which serve to express the unity and solidarity of the clan, also serve to emphasize the relative autonomy of its constituent maximal lineages. Each maximal lineage has its private lineage *bɔyar* (*dugni bɔyar*), the shrine of its particular lineage ancestors, worshipped only by members of that lineage, and the *dugni bɔyar* is conceived as itself a part of, or a derivative of, the clan *Bɔyar* (Duunkpalɔg). It is, so to speak, the domestic incarnation of the great External *Bɔyar*. In the same way each maximal lineage has its private Earth shrine, associated specifically with that part of Zubiuŋ which it occupies, and under the sole custody of its own tendaana. Both in relation to the *Bɔyar* cult and to the Earth cult, the tendaana of each maximal lineage represents the entire lineage. It is through him that these mystical powers are mobilized on behalf of the lineage, and through the joint action of all three tendaanas that they are mobilized for the good of the clan.

The integration of the clan on the religious plane is characteristic of its corporate solidarity in all matters of common interest. Every corporate activity presumes the relative autonomy of the three maximal lineages in relation to one another. The unity of the clan is built up on the relative mutual independence of its segments. Common interests emerge as a balance of divergent emphases, and conversely the autonomous interests of the three constituent maximal lineages of the clan are aspects of the common interests of the whole clan. Thus the rights and duties, privileges and obligations, vested in each maximal lineage, through the mutual adjustment and articulation of which corporate action occurs and clan unity emerges, are jealously guarded by each lineage.

Many incidents could be quoted to substantiate this analysis, but one will suffice. When the final rites of installation for the new Kpayara-yayar tendaana were being carried out I accompanied him and his lineage elders to Duunkpalɔg, where the most important rite of the series was to be performed. We were soon joined by the Yakɔra representatives. The Yapaasdem did not come for another hour or so. Indignant comments were made about their tardiness. It was said to be a chronic fault of theirs, and they were criticized also for neglecting their duty as junior *sunzɔp* who should have come to escort the tendaana-elect to Duunkpalɔg. The Yapaasdem, said one of the elders, were going the way of all things to-day, scorning established custom and taking the course they found most convenient to themselves. 'In a little while', he stormed, 'we shall all (that is, each maximal lineage) be sacrificing separately.' The other elders protested in a chorus at this, exclaiming, 'Oh no, we won't abandon our

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'brethren' (*mabiis*) and, in fact, this brotherhood includes also the *Bɔɣa* of all the clans, Tallensi or non-Tallensi, that take part in the cycle of the Great Festivals.

The idea reflects the sense of belonging to a wider politico-ritual community than their own local cluster of clans that is at the back of every Talaŋ's mind. This notion of the unity of their External *Bɔɣar* cult is especially strong among the Hill Talis, though each congregation has its distinctive variants of some of the ritual conventions. Hence a man who has been initiated into the cult at the *Bɔɣar* at which his own lineage worships can be present at sacrifices at the *Bɔɣar* of any other congregation of Hill Talis, whereas a Zubiuŋ or a Tongo man would not be admitted to the ceremony. This corresponds to the close interlocking of clan with clan and lineage with lineage among the Hill Talis by spatial, clanship, and ritual ties.

It is the same with the cult of the Earth. All Earth shrines (*tɔŋgbana*) are 'brethren' (*mabiis*), the localized places of worship, for defined social groups, of the universal Earth (*Tɛŋ*). The pattern of doctrine and ritual practice of the Earth cult has a much greater uniformity over a wider area than that of the *Bɔɣar* cult. In comparison with the practices of the Hill Talis, the *Bɔɣar* cult among all the other non-Namoo clans of Taleland appears to be whittled down to its barest essentials of rite and belief, and outside the Hill Talis, different *Bɔɣar* congregations are strictly exclusive of one another. In the cult of the Earth identical beliefs and dogmas, norms of conduct, ritual conventions, and social settings hold throughout Taleland. Indeed this is true of the whole of the Northern Territories.[1] This reflects the fact that the economic relations of man to land are practically identical for all the peoples of this area; that the social relations of men, as these are determined by their occupation and exploitation of land, are all of the same pattern throughout this area; and that their mystical notions of the Earth are identical. Tallensi sum this up in the idea that 'the Earth is indivisible (*tɛŋ la pu bɔkɔra*)'.

Bɔɣar and *Tɛŋ* are the foci around which interclan and interlineage associations crystallize out and through which the two dominant religious conceptions of the Tallensi act as the mechanisms and the sanctions of loyalty, amity, co-operation, and respect for one another's corporate rights between genealogically independent units. And these two foci of ritual consolidation are complementary. In spatial relations every maximal lineage belongs to one set of adjacent lineages in the *Bɔɣar* cult and to a different set of adjacent lineages in the Earth cult. It has, there-

[1] The cult of the Earth is a prominent feature of native religion throughout West Africa. The form it takes in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast is common, in its main outlines, to all the peoples of the Sudanese Zone. Cf. references to it *passim* in the previously cited works of Delafosse, Tauxier, Labouret, and Monteil, *Les Bambarra du Segou et du Kaarta*. Rattray, op. cit., gives many data on the cult as found in the Northern Territories, but his interpretations of these data are open to question. He gives much information on its Ashanti form in his works on the Ashanti. The best information from Nigeria is given in C. K. Meek's *Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe*. A point of importance is that there is no convincing evidence of the Earth being personified as a 'Goddess' in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast—certainly not among the Tallensi—as Rattray and Meek claim is the case for the Ashanti and the Ibo.

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fore, two intersecting fields of politico-ritual relations so adjusted that its loyalties to the other component lineages of one field are counterbalanced by its loyalties to the component lineages of the other field. Both sets of politico-ritual loyalties are correlated with the same sort of social interests, symbolized in a single system of religious concepts and values. Their organization in two complementary configurations around polar symbols checks the dangers of disruptive conflicts that might spring from them. Thus the ties of clanship are regrouped around another axis of social integration. Every maximal lineage is a bridge between a *Bɔyar* congregation and a *Tɛŋ* congregation. In most cases, in fact, the component lineages of a particular *Tɛŋ* congregation all belong to, and in that context represent, different *Bɔyar* congregations, and vice versa. This is the fundamental mechanism of the remarkable politico-ritual equilibrium found among the Talis.

The Network of Ritual Ties between Talis Clans

This network of public ritual ties runs through all the Talis clans. Indeed, as we have mentioned before, in the context of the cycle of the Great Festivals, it embraces both Talis and Namoos in the Tongo district, the clans of the Sie district, and a number of adjacent clans beyond the borders of Taleland. Confining ourselves to the Talis only, we find among them an organization of ritual relations analogous in pattern to the network of clanship ties. Adjacent maximal lineages have fields of ritual relations that overlap each other. They are combined thus into a single system of interwoven chains of ritual ties which spread across all the Talis. The ritual field of each maximal lineage corresponds to the parochial aspects of the *Bɔyar* and the Earth cult, the all-embracing network to their universal aspect.

To illustrate this analysis let us take up again the chain of ritual ties that begins at Ba'ari and follow out its further extension from Gbizug to Tɛnzugu. Gbizug and Gbeog, it will be recollected, are segments of a single clan. The ritual focus of their clan unity is the supreme Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) at Gbizug. There the elders of the two segments are obliged to assemble for sacrifice at certain times, notably at certain phases of the Festival cycle and when the funeral ceremonies or the investiture rites of a Gbizug tendaana are performed. The Gbizug tendaana and the Gbeog tendaana install each other in office. But the supreme Earth shrine at Gbizug is in the sole custody of the Gbizug tendaana. The people of Gbeog have their own focal *tɔŋgban*, the custody of which is vested in the Gbeog tendaana, and the people of Gbizug have no ritual connexion with this *tɔŋgban*. The Gbeogdem, again, also practise the cult of the External *Bɔyar* in the manner of the Hill clans. Gbizugdem have nothing to do with this cult. In fact they speak of it with contempt and hold aloof from it as if it were a perversion, even though their own clansmen practise it. 'Our ancestors did not take part in that', they say.

In terms of the Earth cult Gbeog comes into the field of ritual relations of Gbizug. Though it is the closest and most important, it is not the sole component segment of that field. Other adjacent maximal lineages form a part of it. Next to their supreme *tɔŋgban* the most sacred lineage shrine

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182 been discussing have a deeper meaning to the natives than merely as convenient indices of social differentiation. It is on account of their deeper meaning that they serve also, in certain contexts, to identify corporate units. The very casualness with which Tallensi speak of their totemic taboos; the unquestioning way in which they take their funeral customs for granted; and at the other extreme, the connexion of these ritual observances with the supreme religious institution of the Hill Talis, whose influence pervades their whole social life, all show that we are dealing with something that goes down to the axiomatic ideas and values that underpin the social structure.

182 611 These ritual institutions, with their common pattern of injunction, oath, and determination by descent or quasi-descent, form part of an interlocked system of religious values that springs directly out of the social structure. Their common focus is the notion of dependence on the ancestors determined by the fact of descent. But it is not descent in its physiological sense that they refer to. They symbolize the fact that descent, to the Tallensi, axiomatically creates bonds of moral and ritual interdependence and obligation. It is because, as we have previously seen, Tallensi tend to read into all ritual relations, whatever their derivation, corresponding genealogical relationships; because the relations of mutual amity and co-operation, even though only in a limited sphere of conduct, imposed by ritual ties are of the same type as those imposed by ties of kinship; because all the rights and duties determined by descent are kept in force by the sanction of the ancestor spirits, that the values appropriate to the sphere of kinship and descent merge with those expressed in religious cult and doctrine. There is a syncretism in the Tale system of ideas and values that images their syncretic social structure. Lineage system and ancestor cult interfuse and at the same time mirror each other.

●613 Our analysis can be carried farther if we consider what lineage membership means. It is created by the bare physiological fact of patrilineal descent. But the physiological links between the individual and his ancestors and between all the living members of the lineage have no social significance except as the kernel of the social relations and bonds that come out in economic affairs such as the ownership and use of land; in the exercise of moral and jural rights and duties, as in marriage or parenthood; in ritual belief and practice, as in the ancestor cult. This is the stuff of individual and collective life for the native wherever—and this applies to almost everything he does—the fact of descent is relevant. Membership of his lineage, or his clan, or of a religious community means, to the individual, a particular collection of people taken severally in some situations, collectively in others, with whom he has certain kinds of known and regular social relations reflecting their common interests, and based on the continuity and integrity of the group; and he submits to a number of restraints on word and deed in order to maintain his relations with them. A man experiences this in a multitude of particular actions and events, day after day.

As a member of a particular lineage a man has definite rights and duties and enters into a stream of social relations from which all who do not

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belong to that agnatic line are excluded. It is a fact that marks him off 613 ●
from a great many people who come into his range of contact. It determines, for example, whom he may or may not marry, what social roles he may or may not exercise, who will support him in his troubles, where he will make his farms, and especially which named ancestors ritually accessible at certain definite, material shrines govern his life. Of course lineage membership, as we know, isolates only the central area of a person's field of social relations, as this is determined by his birth. Lineage membership, clan membership, and membership of the wider [611]
community of the Hill Talis, or of a *Bɔyar* congregation, are all primarily determined by the fact of birth; and the social relations by which one zone is distinguished from the next in the total field all belong to the same category.

All the members of the lineage are equally members of it, irrespective of age, sex, or status. The social bonds that define the limits of the lineage and mark its social identity for its members are equally binding on all its members. They all share the sentiments engendered by membership of the lineage. They all feel themselves to be embraced within its corporate unity. These are matters of everyday practical experience. But behind them lies the deep sense of the continuity of the agnatic line. This takes the form, in the individual, of a great pride in his ancestry and a strong feeling of identification with the other members of the lineage and with the lineage as a unit in their common dependence on their ancestors.

At their simplest, the totemic and funeral taboos of the Talis are symbolic expressions of the irrevocable and supremely important fact of lineage membership. But if that were all, they might not have taken a ritual form. Among the Talis we can see more plainly than among the Namoos why these symbols of the social identity conferred on individuals and groups by agnatic descent take the form of ritual observances.

Agnatic descent, as we have pointed out, automatically puts one under moral bonds to certain other people. There is no choice about membership of one's lineage. And there can be no questioning or choosing in the matter of the basic norms of lineage relations. One has rights and duties towards one's co-members of the lineage, amity for them, interest in them, common concerns with them, simply and solely because they are of the same agnatic line. Lineage norms are absolutely binding, and the sanction for this is the common ritual dependence of all the members on their ancestors. This is crystallized in the cult of the lineage *bɔyar*, the thing in which the spiritual jurisdiction of the ancestors over all the lineage members is made tangible and accessible to human thought and action. The lineage as a social entity is founded on moral and ritual imperatives. This is how the natives feel it: we need not here concern ourselves with possible scientific explanations of this fact. What matters is that this sense of the moral and ritual imperatives behind lineage relations, explicitly brought out as it is in the cult of the ancestors, is also diffused through all the relations of lineage members. The function of totemic taboos is to crystallize in a clear-cut, concrete, external object of no intrinsic significance this diffused sense of the moral and ritual imperatives behind lineage bonds. The taboos are simple and definite

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613 imperatives symbolizing those other more fundamental imperatives. The very fact that they are trivial in themselves and can be easily remembered and kept without hardship by young and old make them the more effective as social symbols.[1] The natives, of course, cannot formulate such an explanation of their totemic taboos. It can only be inferred from their attitudes and actions just as we infer from our economic actions and attitudes that coins and notes are the symbols of goods and services.

Totemic taboos, it must be remembered, are not the only ritual observances through the medium of which the Talis mark the fact of lineage membership. Lineage membership has many facets, as we have seen, and sometimes one facet is uppermost in thought or action, sometimes another. Two of these facets have principally concerned us here. A person's membership of the lineage emerges in its corporate activities as a unit of social structure; common interests and concerns prevail and the individual counts only as a component of the group. It is as a corporate unit that the lineage has its ritual focus in the lineage *bɔyar*. Though each member stands under the governance of the *bɔyar*, he cannot approach it except through the lineage head and in association with representatives of every branch of the lineage. On the other hand, every member of the lineage carries his lineage membership about with him, as it were, even on his private occasions; it is an abiding attribute of his social personality. We see this most plainly in the case of a woman member who is debarred by her sex from sharing completely in the corporate unity of the lineage. Yet she retains her membership of it all her life as a birthright.

It is this aspect of his lineage membership that is symbolically projected in the totemic taboos for the individual himself. They are to him a sign of his lineage membership and all that it means, a constant reminder of his moral bonds with his fellow members and his ancestors. Through them he expresses his pride in his ancestry and the deep value he attaches to the body of custom bequeathed to him and his fellows by his ancestors.

We can see, now, how the totemic equivalence of distinctive funeral customs comes about. Everything symbolized by totemic avoidances comes ultimately from the fact of birth, as a gift from one's father. On his death he goes to join the ancestors. The rites that transform him into an ancestor spirit express recognition of his role as transmitter of the unique agnatic line, and of the ritual sanctions he represents for the correct conduct of his son as a member of the lineage.

613 But membership of the lineage by birth makes one also a member of
X618 the clan. And this entails obligatory social relations with members of

[1] The connotation given to the word *symbol* in this argument will strike the reader as a cross between Freudian usage and Durkheimian usage. We mean by it (*a*) a complex of a material object, together with the ideas, beliefs, attitudes, and conventional actions associated with it, which (*b*) has no self-evident utilitarian or logical significance to the observer or even to the natives but (*c*) can be understood as explained in the text above. The point of importance for us is that the symbol carries a strong emotional charge and has the value of a direct moral imperative. If this were lacking we should have preferred to call Tale totems emblems or distinguishing devices.

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other lineages. Though the norms of clanship and the social bonds that define the clan are an extension of those that hold within the lineage, they mark out a wider field of social relations for the individual. It is through his clanship ties that the individual gets bound up with the social order as a whole; through them he becomes a member of the wider community of the Hill Talis, which in turn forms part of the yet wider and looser community, the Tallensi in general. Through clan membership one belongs to a community, defined not by specific rights and duties based on the spiritual jurisdiction of one's own ancestors, but principally by common values and common ritual interests. Within the lineage the social personality of the individual is an important factor of his behaviour and of the behaviour of others towards him. Sex, age, and status are significant. In relations between lineages the social personality of the individual fades into the background. It is submerged in the corporate unity of the lineage.

Totems, Clanship, and External Bɔyar

The social bonds of clanship, like those of the lineage, derive their validity from the ancestors. But it is now not a question of a particular known line of ancestry, but of the ancestors in general; and among the Hill Talis these are associated with the External *Bɔyar*.

The External *Bɔyar* is an elaboration of the lineage *bɔyar*, parallel to the elaboration of the lineage structure into the structure of the clan and the network of clanship. It is the seat of all the ancestors of the clans and lineages that make up its congregation. As we have previously learnt, each External *Bɔyar* is the pivot of a group of structurally connected clans and lineages, and at the same time the local embodiment of a single cult embracing all the Hill Talis. Thus the cult of the External *Bɔyar* maintains ritually sanctioned social bonds between a particular group of maximal lineages, and at the same time symbolizes the fundamental common values of all the Hill Talis. It is the quintessence of the social identity of the Hill Talis. Hence, they say that when a boy has been initiated into this cult, 'he at length knows (what it means to be) a Talaŋ (*u pana baŋ Talaŋ*)'. The esoteric significance of the fact of being a Talaŋ has been revealed to the boy. Before that he was a 'woman', a 'child'; now 'he has become an elder'. These terms are used metaphorically to indicate the boy's transformation from a person who was merely a member of the lineage by birth into a full social member of the clan and the wider community.

The *Bɔyar* is the apex of the whole ancestor cult of the Talis. It symbolizes the idea of the ancestors in general, the concept of ancestry, one might say, in contrast to the notion of a particular named line of ancestors. Thus, the Hill Talis speak of the External *Bɔyar*, and often invoke it in ritual, as *Yaab*, Ancestor, that is, the generic, prototypical, anonymous ancestor. The External *Bɔyar* symbolizes the ritual value of the Ancestors to all the Talis. It implies the subjection of all the Talis to a common spiritual jurisdiction, deriving from the Ancestors. It symbolizes the continuity of the whole social order conceived as brought into being by the Ancestors, and kept in being under their spiritual

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symbols. It may be a domestic animal peculiarly associated with the man because he reared it. But far more significance is attached to a bush animal killed in the hunt, or an aquatic animal caught in a fish drive. Encountering such an animal is a matter of luck. Overcoming it demands skill and has an element of danger; and this singles out the successful hunter or fisherman from his fellows. It is a sign of the intervention of his *Yin* ancestors in his life and the animal is an obvious choice as a symbol for them. It should be stressed that the question of economic value does not come in at all. Bush and aquatic animals have very little economic value. It is as symbols of personal achievement and luck that they have meaning.

But what is the common psychological theme in these different categories of animal symbolism? The relations between men and their ancestors among the Tallensi are a never-ceasing struggle. Men try to coerce and placate their ancestors by means of sacrifices. But the ancestors are unpredictable. It is their power to injure and their sudden attacks on routine well-being that make men aware of them rather than their beneficent guardianship. It is by aggressive intervention in human affairs that they safeguard the social order. Do what they will, men can never control the ancestors. Like the animals of the bush and the river, they are restless, elusive, ubiquitous, unpredictable, aggressive. The relations of men with animals in the world of common-sense experience are an apt symbolism of the relations of men with their ancestors in the sphere of mystical causation.

It is an interesting point that the commonest and most widely respected totem or quasi-totem animals are what Tallensi call 'teeth-bearers' (*nyindem*)—reptiles and carnivores, whose weapons are their teeth and who live and defend themselves by attacking other animals or even men. The symbolical link with the potential aggressiveness of the ancestors is patent.[1] This is, no doubt, the chief reason why other species of earth-dwelling animals are not selected as Earth taboos.

To sum up, animals are peculiarly apt symbols for the livingness—the immortality—of the ancestors as this emerges in the various functionally differentiated aspects of the social life. They symbolize, in particular, the potential aggressiveness of the ancestors as the supreme sanction of Tale cultural values. They serve to crystallize in simple, concrete, unequivocal imperatives and images the notion of the binding force of the moral code which is not clearly apparent in the diffused and particularized imperatives that make up the day-to-day experience of it. Different animal symbols stand for different aspects of the moral code, but they all form a connected series corresponding to the unitary basis of that code and the all-embracing sanctions of the ancestor cult. The principles of right and wrong, of duty and justice, of what is permissible and what is prohibited in social life fall into a consistent scheme among the Tallensi. And as the existence of the society depends on the maintenance of this code, its ultimate sanctions are necessarily of mystical form.

[1] Teeth are a common symbol of aggression among many peoples. The association is familiar to psychologists. We have it ourselves—witness our expression 'to show one's teeth'.

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562 ×618 *pɔyayàbələg*, particularly of one who is living at her husband's house. To be sure, her kinship ties with her own family and with the segment of the maximal lineage to which her father belongs are not severed; indeed, a woman's relations with her paternal clan are largely regulated and mediated by these ties. The concept of *pɔyayabələg* implicitly stresses the fact that it is a woman's fate to be married out of the clan and to be cut off from its routine corporate activity; and it contains the idea that a woman thus separated from her parental home is felt to belong primarily to the widest corporate unit that stands in contraposition to her husband's, where his relations with her are concerned.

Thus outside the range of the lineage segment in which generation differences are recognized, a *pɔyayabələg* is referred to as 'our sister (*ti tau*)' by any of her clansmen, and she speaks of them as *ntap*, 'my brothers'. A man visiting the settlement of another clan makes himself at home in the rooms of any *pɔyayabələg* of his clan. When the cow-peas are ripening, a *pɔyayabələg* visiting her clan settlement—her 'father's house' (*ba yiri*), as it is described by extension of the concept of the father's house or lineage in the narrowest sense—may pluck cow-pea leaves (*bɛŋət*) for herself anywhere in the settlement. A Yaməlag or Sie *pɔyayabələg* can do this at Tongo, for instance, if she is merely passing [578] through on her way elsewhere. No one would resent it; but if the wife of a member of a segment of the clan other than his own were to pluck a man's cow-pea leaves without his express permission, it would lead to a quarrel. Similarly, it is customary for women to come and collect a basket of grain from the men of their parental family after the harvest. A *pɔyayabələg*, however, is permitted to ask any of her clansmen for a gift of this kind. Thus it sometimes happens that a Yaməlag or Sie woman married to a man at Yinduuri comes to a clansman at Tongo after the harvest for a gift of grain, or a Tongo woman married to a man at Datɔk or Duusi calls on a clansman at Sie for such a gift. As these examples indicate, a *pɔyayabələg* of a linked maximal lineage counts as a *pɔyayabələg* of the clan.

562 764 When a woman's funeral is celebrated by her husband's people the last act is 'to send her home (*kulh*)' to her father's house. For this ceremony a large party of men and women in their gayest clothes, led by the nearest agnates of the dead woman and escorted by drummers and musicians, sets out for her husband's settlement to 'receive her funeral (*die koor*)'. When such a party is being assembled, messages are sent to the heads of all the constituent lineages of the clan, and representatives are generally sent from all the lineages to accompany the party. It is partly a matter of duty, and partly an act of courtesy and a voluntary demonstration of clan solidarity. Sometimes young people of linked lineages join the party, knowing that it will be lavishly entertained by the affinal clan and that there will be dancing and girls to flirt with. Fetching the funeral of a *pɔyayabələg* is an affair of the whole clan.

562 ●613 The *pɔyayabələg* has a formal status in the lineage and clan, and this status is recognized as an intrinsic element in the structure of the lineage and clan. The fiction behind this is the idea often explicitly stated by the natives that but for an accident of birth she might have been a man

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and her sons might have been able to exercise all the rights and duties of clanship. There is, in fact, a submerged feeling of rivalry in the relations between the men of the clan and the *pɔyayabəlis*, deprived by an accident of birth of effective jural and ritual membership of the clan. This is shown, for example, in a curious taboo affecting the oldest living *pɔyayabəlɔg* of a maximal lineage. She may never spend a night in the homestead of the head of the maximal lineage, even if he is her own brother. If she did, either or both of them would die. For the lineage ancestors abide in this homestead, and they object to her presence there simultaneously with that of their proper male custodian. The natives, of course, simply state this taboo as a fact, but to anyone familiar with Tale culture the interpretation is obvious. The senior *pɔyayabəlɔg* might, in her own person, have been the head of the lineage but for the accident of birth. Her presence in the homestead which she might have occupied as a man is a hidden challenge and reproach both to the male head of the lineage and to the ancestors. It would be tantamount to a symbolic rejection of the fundamental principles of the lineage organization. For these reasons she cannot stay with the man who most conspicuously represents the extrusion of women from the full heritage of patrilineal descent.

Institutionalized Recognition of a Clanswoman's Status

There are many institutions in which the status of the *pɔyayabəlɔg* as an intrinsic element in the lineage organization is recognized. For example, a new-born child is confined to its father's house for some months. When it is big enough to be allowed out of doors it must be ritually taken out for the first time by a *pɔyayabəlɔg* of the clan. Usually she is a near agnate of the father, but any clanswoman may be asked to carry out the rite. The child's father consults a diviner to find out who will be a suitable *pɔyayabəlɔg*; for the rite is implicitly a blessing of the ancestors, and it is they who are believed to appoint a woman of the clan to carry their blessing to the child. It can be surmised that a *pɔyayabəlɔg* is chosen for this rite because she is by birth identified with the child's father and its lineage, and by sex identified with the child's mother and the function of motherhood. Taking the child out of the house is in part a question of maternal care, therefore a woman's task; it is also a step that involves the child's physical and spiritual well-being. Outside the walls of the homestead lie greater dangers, both material and mystical, than inside the homestead, and this is the concern of the child's patrilineal ancestors.

The role of *pɔyayabəlis* in relation to the lineage *bɔyar* is significant in this connexion. A woman cannot become the custodian of an ancestor shrine, except nominally if she is the sole survivor of a lineage. In that case she cannot sacrifice to the shrine directly, but must call in a collateral male agnate to deputize for the man who might have been the custodian of the shrine. This is the most important distinction between the status of male members and that of female members of the lineage, and it is a consequence of the fact that women do not help to maintain the continuity of the lineage. Nevertheless, *pɔyayabəlis* have the right to take part

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562 in sacrifices to their lineage ancestors. When an important sacrifice is
793 due to be made to a lineage *bɔyar*, the married *pɔyayabəlis* of the lineage
769 who live near enough to be able to attend, and especially the senior *pɔyayabəlɔg*, must be informed. Those who can, will attend the rite, and a prescribed portion (*tɔrɔg*) of the animal sacrificed is the due of the *pɔyayabəlis*. This portion, consisting of the 'waist' (*sie*), i.e. part of the vertebral column and some of the ribs, together with prescribed bits of various internal organs and the intestines, is divided among the *pɔyayabəlis*, both married and unmarried, who are present. The allocation of a prescribed portion of a sacrificial animal to any group or individual is the most significant indication, in Tale culture, that that group or individual has a recognized formal status in the social structure.

428 An outstanding event in the life of a lineage is the inheritance (*vaagər*),
● 613 that is, the formal assumption of the custody, of a lineage *bɔyar* by a new
796 lineage head. Being old men generally, lineage heads seldom survive succession to this status for many years. Thus, the inheritance of a lineage *bɔyar* is an event of fairly frequent recurrence at periods varying
[182] from five to ten years. It is an occasion on which the integration of the lineage is at its maximum. Every member, male and female, who can do so makes an effort to attend. Those who are heads of families contribute fowls and flour to be added to the sacrifices on their behalf. All cognates by descent through women of the lineage who live near enough are invited, and those who are heads of families also bring contributions for the sacrifice. In short, the occasion is a sacrament in which all the descendants of the lineage ancestors, through both men and women, participate, and it is regarded as a particularly auspicious sacrament.

613 One of the first rites in the inheritance of a lineage *bɔyar* is the transfer
796 of the shrine from the homestead of its late custodian to that of his succes-
[787] sor. This rite is carried out by one male member of the lineage, almost invariably a member of the segment whose head has become head of the
562 lineage, and one *pɔyayabəlɔg* of the lineage, both selected by divination. Later, when many fowls brought by those present are sacrificed to the *bɔyar* to mark its transfer to a new lineage head, this pair are the first of the lineage members to present their offerings. Thus is symbolized the equality of status of men and women members of the lineage before the *bɔyar*, and the rights of women members and their descendants to the spiritual protection of the lineage ancestors.

604 As we have seen in our consideration of attached lineages, and as
x 618 we shall learn more fully when we examine the relations of maternal
587 uncle and sororal nephew,[1] there are circumstances in which descent through a woman is partially assimilated to the true agnatic line. To give only one example here, a sororal nephew (*ahəŋ*) of any degree whatsoever, that is, any member of another clan who has a cognatic link with the clan in question through an ancestress however remote, is formally equated with the sons of the clan in the matter of leviratic rights. An *ahəŋ* has the right to seek the hand of a widow of his maternal uncle's clan (*ahəb yiri*) on the same terms as a true member of that clan. He is, so to speak, exercising the right, corollary to the obligation of clan exogamy, that

[1] In *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*.

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they may come from. For these women feel themselves to be as closely akin to one another as members of the same clan, by contraposition with the Tallensi whom they have married.

The *pɔyayabəlis* act together as a single group under the leadership of the oldest among them at funeral ceremonies. The young girls perform such tasks as bringing in the great bundles of firewood required for cooking the beer. The older *pɔyayabəlis*, expert in the preparation of beer, undertake that task themselves. The younger women do the more strenuous jobs connected with cooking, such as grinding flour and preparing the other ingredients of a meal. The older women cook the porridge and meat relishes required for such rites as the setting out of consecrated food for the dead. All food required for ritual use is prepared by the *pɔyayabəlis*, since all the ritual is the preserve of the clan. As members of the clan they can be associated with the ritual activities of the clan, and as women they can carry out tasks which are appropriate to their sex in accordance with the usual division of labour. The *dubɔnib* do not prepare the food required for ritual purposes, but only the food used to give hospitality to clansmen, kinsmen, and other visitors.

The *pɔyayabəlis* have also to be directly represented by one of them, most appropriately by one of the older women, in many of the rites. A *pɔyayabələg* has to assist in such rites as the offering of the initial sacrifices to the spirit of the departed and to the ancestors he or she is about to join. A *pɔyayabələg* and a man of the clan see to the ritual feeding of the orphans, which takes place at different stages of the ceremonies. The various mourning strings (*miis*) which the orphans and widows have to wear during the funeral ceremonies are tied on, and at the end removed, by an elderly *pɔyayabələg*. The setting out of consecrated food for the dead is always done by one male and one female member of the clan. And then, when the final divination takes place, a man and a woman of the lineage together carry out the simple rite of restoring the dead person's body dirt (*dayat*), the symbol of his individual self, to the house where his life was spent, and whither he now returns as a spirit to whom sacrifice must be offered.

Lastly, a married *pɔyayabələg* is a link between her paternal clan and her husband's clan, both in herself and in the line of descent which springs from her. This is evident nowadays from the role of the *pɔyasama* —a clansman of the bridegroom and a matrilateral kinsman of the bride's lineage—as an intermediary in marriage negotiations. It was shown in former days in peace-making ceremonies. If two clans, or groups of clans, had been at war, peace was concluded by a ritual reconciliation. In this the opponents were usually represented by a *pɔyayabələg* of each side who was married to a member of the other side, who was therefore bound by jural and moral ties to both sides and had strong emotional attachments to both, and thus symbolized the underlying interdependence of the opponents.

Lineage and clan consist of both their male and their female members. Though the women do not contribute to the continuity and perpetuation of the lineage, they are a source of strength to it. This is most obvious in the fact that the bride-price paid for them adds to the resources by

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means of which the lineage acquires wives. But what is more important, the women carry the descent of the clan into other clans, and thus build up that network of interclan kinship ties which breaks down the rigid exclusiveness of the lineage and clan, interweaves clan with clan, and is one of the factors that restrain strife between clans and prevent Tale society from splitting into anarchic fragments. Since the tie of descent is indestructible, women members of the lineage and clan have definite rights and duties in all those practical and ritual institutions which bring out most precisely the solidarity and corporate identity of the lineage through the passage of time and the mutability of generations.

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of politico-ritual unity and solidarity existing between the three clans. To give up land to them is, therefore, an act of virtue that creates yet closer mutual bonds.

The four sections of Tongo are not marked off from one another by territorial boundaries. But each is more or less concentrated in one locality, forming a more or less exclusive local unit, looked at from within. Members of one section are not found living right in the middle of another section. In theory they are at liberty to do so. In practice they would find it impossible, owing partly to the absence of unowned land at Tongo, but mainly to the pull of lineage loyalties. For the territorial segmentation of Tongo is a function of its precise and definitive lineage segmentation; a section is the local framework of a lineage segment. By the lineage criterion the sections are relatively autonomous units within the limits set by their common descent, but they are held together in a remarkably stable social equilibrium by their common interests. This has a counterpart in their territorial relations, which show them to have reached a stable ecological equilibrium *inter se*. The area occupied by each section is now finally fixed in location and more or less fixed in extent. Where any of them has expanded in the last three or four generations it has been chiefly at the expense of Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, not of another Tongo section. Thus, as in the case of composite clans, a social boundary exists between one section of Tongo and another. There is more intimate and regular daily intercourse, more mutual aid, closer and more binding moral, jural, and ceremonial bonds, between the members of a section, both children and adults, and between their wives, than between them and members, or wives of members, of another section. There are latent hostilities and hence a greater probability of dissension between sections than within sections. Thus they have a competitive orientation towards one another where some common interests, like the chiefship, are concerned.

Territorial Distribution and the Tɛŋ in its Mystical Aspect

As with many other Tale settlements, there is no relation between the territorial distribution of the people of Tongo and the distribution of ritual jurisdiction over the land on which they live. This was the point emphasized by the Yinduurnsʼab in the case previously quoted. Tongo stretches over the ritual domains of several tɛndaanas. Guŋ proper lies on the outskirts of the Gbeog tɛndaanaʼs *tɛŋ*; most of Puhug is on the Gbizug tɛndaanaʼs ritual territory; Kuorəg is on land under the ritual jurisdiction of the Soog Yikpɛmdaan; Seug partly on Zoo *tɛŋ* and partly on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*, Dekpieŋ mostly on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*.

The bearing of this on the internal structure of Tongo is only indirect. The section or part of a section dwelling on a particular tɛndaanaʼs *tɛŋ* and thus coming within the scope of his ritual powers has closer ties of neighbourliness and of affinal and cognatic kinship with that tɛndaanaʼs clan than other sections have. Differences in the local taboos of the Earth (*tɛŋɔn kiha*) observed by the people of Tongo symbolize these ties. For example, a red pot must be left on a new grave at Kuorəg, because this is a taboo of Soog *tɛŋ*. Elsewhere in Tongo this is not done. Soog elders and youths always take part in the festive phases of a Kuorəg funeral, in a

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the latter can claim a contingent right to the land and cannot be dispossessed without offence to their common ancestor or ancestress; or because the land was virgin at the time of the gift and the donor 'cut' (*kie*) it for the recipient in virtue of being the tɛndaana of the area. Thus all farm-land is either owned or in process of becoming owned.

The ownership (*solɔm*) of farm-land is a precise jural concept among the Tallensi. Briefly, it is vested in a lineage and forms the most important part of the lineage patrimony (*faar*). When, in course of time, this lineage splits up, some of the *faar* land will be apportioned among the resulting segments, each of which will retain perpetual and exclusive ownership of its portion. The rest of the *faar* land remains the common property of the whole lineage. Though the bulk of farm-land is owned by nuclear lineages, there is land owned by lineages of larger span than the average nuclear lineage.

To say that land is owned by a lineage is equivalent to saying that it is generally acquired by right of inheritance. All males of the lineage have the right to inherit lineage land, but at any given time control over it is vested in the head of the lineage, by right of seniority. He inherits (*vaa*) what amounts to full usufructuary rights within the limits of the co-existing rights of the other members of the lineage. The utilization of the land is at his discretion; he disposes of the crops; and in some settlements he is nominally free to pledge or to sell the land. But he is subject to restraints which observation shows to be very effective. He is bound to provide fairly for the wants of those who share the labour of farming with him. Tallensi formulate this obligation in terms of reciprocity within the productive unit, which they regard as a matter of natural justice and moral duty. They emphasize, however, that there is also a strong practical sanction behind the rule. A man who deals meanly or unscrupulously with his younger brothers, sons, or brother's sons will find that they leave him at the first opportunity; and the strength of this sanction has increased now that young men, and even girls, can easily slip away to work abroad. In accordance with this obligation a lineage head always consults his dependants about the disposal of land, crops, or other patrimonial property.

There is also a religious sanction, the converse of the obligation to one's dependants, and the ritual projection of the common interest of the lineage in its patrimonial land. Inherited farm-land is a sacred trust of the ancestors. Their labour won it for human use, hallowed it, and preserved it for their descendants. It belongs to them. To pledge it is a slur on them; to sell it a sacrilege. 'It will kill deaths (*de kura kum*)'—the offended ancestors will cause deaths in the family of the seller—the natives say. And the strength of this sanction is such that only dire necessity will make a man sell ancestral land in the settlements where this is allowed. It is, in fact, an uncommon thing for farm-land to be sold, both for technological reasons, and on account of the ritual sanction against sale. In places like Tongo, land sales do occur, however, but appear to have been more frequent in the past than at present. Three out of every four nuclear lineages at Tongo possess farm plots that they claim have been purchased during the past two or three generations.

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In the past hunger or a pressing bride-price debt often left a man with no other resource than to sell his land; and a man in a tight corner, the natives say, does not care about ritual sanctions. Nowadays there are other ways in which a man can struggle through (*walɔg*) such difficulties.

Where land is concerned Tallensi always connect the fear of mystical punishment by the ancestors with the obligations towards one's dependants and coheirs. The religious sanction and the practical sanction are thought of as aspects of the total economic and kinship configuration. The head of the nuclear lineage is not only bound to but wants to preserve his patrimonial land for his successors, because it is the foundation of the lineage's subsistence. And his brothers and sons do not rely solely on ritual and moral sanctions. They will use every legitimate means to prevent him from selling or pledging land that is due to come to them on his death.

Despite these sanctions the pledging of farm-land is not uncommon; and judging by what happens in such cases, it is probable that much land now regarded as having been bought came into the possession of its present owners by having been pledged, in the first instance, and not redeemed. But the attitude of the natives in such cases is well illustrated by the behaviour of a man I knew very well. He was an extravagant man and had accumulated debts to the tune of about thirty shillings in the past few years. But he was also, like most Tallensi, touchy about his reputation. So when his creditors began to press him, and his failure to pay began to arouse gossip, he borrowed money on the security of his ancestral land. For months afterwards, whenever I met him, he could talk of nothing else but his pledged land. His remorse and apprehension were obvious, for he knew that only a windfall would ever enable him to redeem the land. It was like a Damocles sword over his head. 'If I do not repay the loan my forefathers won't allow it. They will kill deaths in my family', he told me anxiously.

Borrowing land for a season or a period of years is very common. I have never heard of a case in which the lender has been cheated of his right of resumption. Here, again, the sanction of the ancestor cult is the significant factor. When land is borrowed for a long time, the decisive act in the transaction is a sacrifice to the lineage ancestors of the lender's lineage. This is performed in the presence of the other members of the lineage who have an interest in the land, and of the borrower, who must provide the animals and libations for the rite. Though the loan is made at the discretion of the head of the lineage owning the land, his co-members must consent and the lineage ancestors must be informed. The ancestors who 'own' the land are exhorted to prosper the borrower. Without this covenant, expressing the consent of all concerned, the transaction is void. The borrower would not venture to farm the land, even if this were possible. He believes that the owners' outraged ancestors will bring disaster on him, if he did so.

It is important to note that, with rare exceptions, such land transactions always take place between kinsmen or clansmen. All forms of land ownership and utilization exist only within the genealogical frame of the

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471 social structure. The economic utilization of land is regulated by the
426 process of segmentation in the lineage and by the system of co-operation
602 in the household. It turns upon the acceptance, by the members of the household, of the norms governing their relationships and the enforcement of these norms, in accordance with the principle of reciprocity, by direct action. Behind these norms stands the ancestor cult, the supreme sanction of solidarity in the pursuit of common interests by the lineage. Granted favourable external conditions, the efficiency of production, among the Tallensi, with the technical means at their disposal, depends on the organization of the household and lineage.

613 Broadly speaking, then, every unit of farm-land corresponds to a unit
471 of social structure. More specifically, the elementary utilitarian unit of territory corresponds to the elementary unit of the social structure, and the relationship between them, summed up in the concept of ownership, is a permanent one. The history of a nuclear lineage is *eo ipso* the history of its farm-land. Every change in the structure of the lineage implies a corresponding change in the distribution of the usufructuary rights in its farm-land. While the lineage exists it never forfeits ownership of its farm-land, whether its members cultivate it or not. The strength of the tie felt to hold between a lineage and its ancestral farm-land (*banam kuo*) is shown in the rule that purchased land is redeemable at any time by repayment of the purchase price (or more probably, as we have suggested, of the original loan) by the vendor lineage.[1]

621 The keystone of the institutional framework of Tale agriculture is
471 security of land tenure. But what, we may ask, guarantees to the lineage
182 security of ownership of its farm-land, in the absence of judicial institutions and instruments? The answer is contained in the Tale concept of *the tey as a community*. *The landowning unit is a segment of a maximal* lineage and its property rights are an aspect of its corporate relationship to the maximal lineage and clan. Within a settlement the stretch of land parcelled out into farm plots corresponds to the clan occupying that locality as it segmented into a hierarchy of lineage units. All segments of the clan of the same order are equal to one another. They have an equal weight in the structure of the clan, equal power in its affairs. They have, in consequence, equal property rights (though not necessarily equal amounts of property), equal opportunity for holding and farming land (though not necessarily equal achievement), and equal social duties to one another. Hence each segment respects the land rights of all other segments, just as it respects their rights in relation to their wives and children. This is an aspect of the solidarity of the clan, one of the indices of the common interest of all members of the clan in one another's welfare. It is a feature of the equilibrium of interlineage and intra-clan relationships. The relative structural autonomy of the nuclear lineage, which is a basic factor in the equilibrium of the maximal lineage and clan, presupposes corresponding economic autonomy. Just as members of the same

[1] In practice, the rule does not hold beyond three generations, by which time all witnesses to the transaction, and their sons (whom they would have told of it) are dead, but attempts are often made to assert the right of redemption after three generations.

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CHAPTER XII

THE LINEAGE IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

General Features

A CENTRAL factor in the continuity and stability of a Tale settlement is the economic organization; but the persistent morphological framework, the factor that gives its peculiar stamp to the form of a Tale community, is its lineage skeleton. The critical feature is the congruence of local aggregation and continuity with lineage aggregation and continuity.

To observe the operation of the lineage principle in the structure of a Tale settlement, we must isolate for consideration its male population. '*Bumpok pu meet yiri*—a woman does not build a house', say the natives, in words reminiscent of the Roman formula, *mulier finis familiae est*. That is to say, a lineage is not perpetuated by its women members, but only by its male members. We have previously studied the Tale lineage system in its macroscopic structure, from the outside, as it were. We proceed, now, to study it from within.

We shall keep Tongo as our model. Tongo is the *tɛŋ* of the senior of the four branches of the clan of Mosuor biis, each of which has the form of a maximal lineage though it is in reality only a major segment of a maximal lineage. In addition, there are at Tongo several accessory lineages linked to the authentic line of Mosuor biis by some genealogical fiction or other. If allowance is made for the special linkage of these accessory lineages to the authentic line of Mosuor biis, we can place all the men of Tongo on a single, patrilineal, chart. All their lines of ascent converge in Mosuor. They all belong to the same set of lineages, graded in segments of increasing span and rising order of segmentation and contained within the lineage limits fixed by their unilineal ancestry.

Births and deaths among its members continually change the composition of the sub-clan. Deaths of male members often cause further segmentation in the lineages of smallest span. They do not affect the lineage equilibrium of the sub-clan as a whole, for this is a function of the relations between the segments of highest order. The structural relations of all segments of an order higher than the minimal segments are finally fixed. If we take any one of these supra-minimal segments by itself, its place in the whole system can be altered only by the extinction of a co-ordinate segment of a lineage of greater span of which it forms a part. Hence the point of time chosen for an analysis of the system is immaterial.

Analysis of a Lineage from Within

Since all the men of Tongo can be included in a single genealogical tree, it is immaterial whom we choose as the starting-point for our

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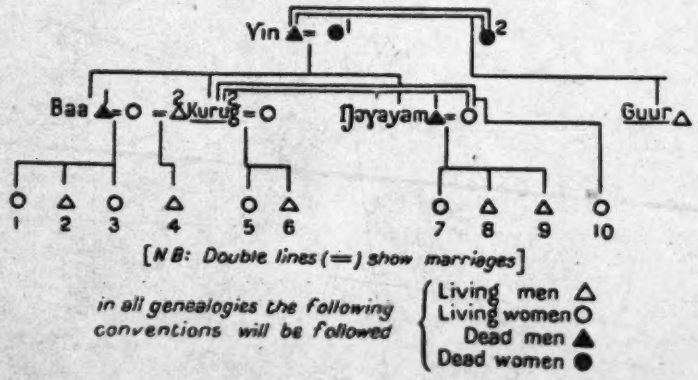
analysis. Yidaan-Yin-Kurug is as convenient a person for this as anybody else. Lean and angular, like most Tale men, with the greying hair of a man past middle age, he occupies homestead No. 6 in Puhug, near the rough track that used to be a Government-made road. He is a man of some substance as wealth goes in Tongo, a section headman[1] (*Kambɔnaaba*) and one of the lesser elders (*Kpɛmtayəlis*). But one would have to know the Tallensi very well to detect his status if one saw him in his usual garb of a loin-cloth stiff and greasy with body dirt, and an equally soiled body-cloth. Kurug is an average man of his age in Taleland, an industrious farmer by native standards, a law-abiding citizen, a loyal member of his section and of the settlement. (Cf. following genealogical chart and map at end of book.)



The unit of interest to us here includes: Kurug, the head (*kpeem*), his younger brother (*pit*) Guur, more strictly described as his *sunzɔ* (half-brother), his own children (*biis*), Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 10; his deceased older full-brother (*bier-soog*) Baa's children, Nos. 1, 2, 3; his deceased younger full-brother (*pit-soog*) Ŋɔyayam's children, Nos. 7, 8, 9. He describes these children of his dead brothers as his children (*biis*), and they speak of him as their father (*ba*). Except for two of the girls, who are married and therefore away from home, all the other children live under Kurug's roof and authority. His *pit*, Guur, is away too, in Mampurugu, where he went to live a few years ago.

This lineage is typical of what we may call the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of the smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort. It is not, it should be noted, an amorphous, internally undifferentiated unit; differences of generation, age, and maternal origin regulate the relations between its members. What is more important, the

[1] These headmen are an innovation due to the British Administration. They are appointed by chiefs and other heads of clans or locally associated groups of clans to assist them in carrying out the tasks demanded by the Administration. Before 1933 a headman's position gave him many opportunities of enriching himself by extortion.

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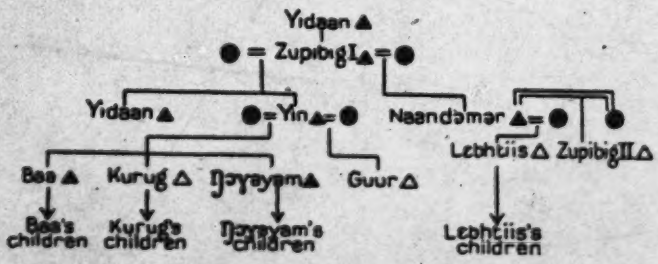
germs of a further segmentation by agnatic lines is present in this unit. Baa's children and Dɔɣayam's children, being minors, still form part of Kurug's joint family; they are economically, jurally, and ritually dependent on him. But they have different fathers from Kurug's children. The effective minimal lineage, which is functionally the corporate unit of lowest order, may, and here does, comprise several morphologically lower minimal lineages.[1]

By the canon of agnatic descent Baa's children form one segment of the effective minimal lineage, Kurug and his children another, Dɔɣayam's children a third, and Guur a fourth. As, however, they have no functional autonomy at this phase of their development, they may be regarded as minimal lineages submerged in the effective minimal lineage identified by reference to their immediate common progenitor, Yin. Eventually each of these submerged segments will become segregated as a relatively autonomous effective minimal lineage.

About 80 yards from Kurug (homestead No. 11), live Lɛbhtiis and Zupibig (II), whom he describes as his *pirib* (sing. *pit*), younger brothers, with their families. They have the following genealogical relationship to each other and to Kurug:

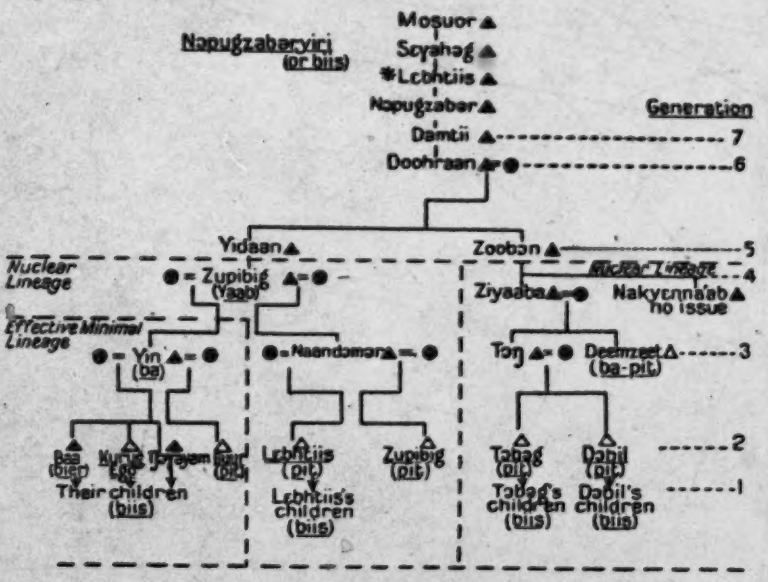


Lɛbhtiis is the head of an effective minimal lineage (Naandəmər yidɛm) of exactly the same span and order as that (Yin yidɛm) of which Kurug is head. They are segments of the inclusive lineage of greater span and next higher order, Zupibig yidɛm, named after their common grandfather (*yaab*), or, more usually, Yidaan yidɛm, after their common great-grandfather (*yaab*). Kurug, the oldest of the four brothers (*sumɔɔp*), is the head of this lineage, which we shall call a nuclear lineage.

Next door to Lɛbhtiis (homestead No. 10) live Deemzeet, whom Kurug and his brothers refer to as *ti ba* (our father), and his deceased brother's two sons (*biis*), Tɔbɔg and Dɔbil, whom Kurug describes as *mpirib* (my younger brothers), and Lɛbhtiis as *mbiernam* (my older brothers).

[1] The introduction of so many indicator terms for the different grades of lineage segments requires an apology, but experience has shown that some such artificial device is necessary if the Tale lineage system is to be made clear to the English reader. The distinction here drawn between the *effective minimal lineage* (or segment) as the functional unit of lowest order, and the *minimal lineage* (or segment) as the morphological unit of lowest order, is important. An effective minimal lineage is usually the framework of a domestic family and includes women members.

613 Deemzeet's house (*yir*) has the following genealogical relationship to Zupibig yidem:



Taken by itself, Deemzeet's house has the same internal structure as Kurug's or Lebhtiis's; but Təbag and Dəbil are men of mature years with grown children. Though still formally under the jural, economic, and ritual authority of Deemzeet, they have considerable autonomy in ritual, jural, and economic affairs that concern their own segment (Təŋ biis) of
[589] the nuclear lineage. If Deemzeet, a timid old bachelor, had any children, the relative independence of Təŋ biis would be more obvious. The nuclear lineage of which Deemzeet is head has reached a more advanced phase of internal differentiation than that of which Kurug is head. This is due, partly, to its being an older lineage, which existed in its present form when Kurug and Guur were still minors under the tutelage of their own father, Yin, and Lebhtiis and Zupibig (II) were minors dependent on their father, Naandomor. But Deemzeet's house is not the older lineage in the sense that its members are older than the members of the lineages with which we are contrasting it; it is older in that it represents an earlier phase of the segmentation of the inclusive lineage of which Kurug's house, Lebhtiis's house, and Deemzeet's house to-day form the constituent and co-ordinate segments. Its head is a generation superior to Kurug and Lebhtiis in terms of their common descent. Thus it is the senior of the two segments. The span of a lineage being a function of its internal genealogical constitution, a three-generation lineage has a wider span than a two-generation lineage. But the order of a lineage is determined by its segmentary relationship to other lineages which are complementary to it—brother (*nuuɔ*) segments—in a greater, inclusive

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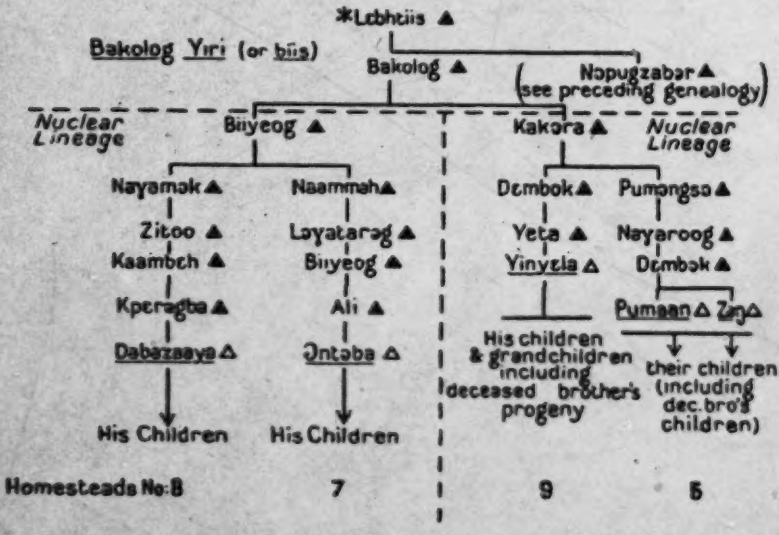
lineage. Lineages are differentiated in terms of their genealogical distance from one another within their common agnatic descent.

The whole lineage we have been analysing is often designated Doohraan yidɛm (or biis), by reference to its ancestor, Doohraan; but it is more frequently described as Nɔpugzabɔr yidɛm (or biis), going back to Doohraan's putative grandfather. This lineage is the skeleton of what may be called an expanded family, each of its component effective minimal segments being the foundation, similarly, of a domestic family.[1]

Nɔpugzabɔr yidɛm constitute a major segment of a wider lineage. Homesteads 5, 7, 8, and 9, the closest neighbours of the homesteads of Nɔpugzabɔr yidɛm, are occupied by the various branches of a lineage of the same order as Nɔpugzabɔr yiri. Its genealogical structure is briefly as follows:



[1] Tale domestic organization is analysed in our next volume. Here it is sufficient to say that the modal family unit is the polygynous, agnatic joint family occupying its own homestead. This is the prototypical *yir*, house (pl. *yɔɔ*). Its typical substratum is an effective minimal lineage of two, or less commonly, three generations. Thus it may consist of two or more brothers (half or full brothers or cousins); or a man and some or all of his sons, and, occasionally, grandsons, together with the wives and young children of all the males. The joint family always constitutes a single jural unit; most often, but not always, it is also a single economic unit. The pivot of this *yir* is its male head (*yirdaana*, owner of the house). He represents the continuity of the patrilineal line in the structure of the family. He is the (patricentral) focus of co-operation and of jural and ritual unity in the family. This is symbolized by the position of the granary in the centre of the homestead and by the reservation of the space in front of the gateway (*zanɔr*) for the affairs of the men. Complementarily, each woman has her own separate quarters in the homestead where her children live under her care, and where she is mistress in domestic affairs. This is her *dug* (lit. room, pl. *dugɔt*); and this is the prototype of the lineage *dug*. Thus the children of the family—that is, the lineage growing out

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613 We have set down only the agnatic affiliation of the heads of the effective minimal segments of the lineage, for the relations of these segments with one another are determined by these ties, not by their respective internal constitutions. The head of this lineage (Bakolog yiri) was Yinyɛla; he died in 1937—a hoary ancient and one of the oldest men in Tongo, at least 75 years of age. He called Ɔntəba *yaaŋ* (grandson), and Dabazaaya *yaaŋkalee* (great-grandson), and Pumaan, a man in the late forties or early fifties, *bii* (child).

Mutatis mutandis, Bakolog yir has the same internal organization and residential distribution as Nəpugzabər yir, though it is more differentiated.

Nəpugzabər yidɛm and Bakolog yidɛm are two co-ordinate segments (*dugət*) of the wider lineage (*yir*) Lɛbhtiis[1] yidɛm. From Deemzeet to Lɛbhtiis inclusively seven generations are reckoned. From Yinyɛla to Lɛbhtiis only six generations are reckoned. This is not fortuitous, for Yinyɛla claims to belong to the generation of Deemzeet's father.

Lɛbhtiis yidɛm include three more *dugət*, segments co-ordinate with Nəpugzabər yidɛm and Bakolog yidɛm. These are:—

(*a*) Nədɛyər yir, the only surviving branch of which comprises but a single segment of narrow span consisting of three full brothers and their children who live in homestead No. 12.

(*b*) Pəyasəŋ yir, whose members occupy homesteads 17, 22, 28, 29, and 33.

(*c*) Gbɛn yir, in homesteads 18, 19, 20, 23, 24.

As with Nəpugzabər yidɛm, a count of seven generations, inclusive, separates the heads of these three lineages from their ancestor, Lɛbhtiis. All these segments preserve the names of what appear to be redundant ancestors, like Damtii in the genealogical chart of Nəpugzabər yidɛm. For, in conformity with their structural relations as co-ordinate segments of a single lineage, their particular genealogies must be congruent (see Ch. III). Bakolog yidɛm, with one ascendant generation less in their pedigree, fit into the set on the assumption—which they uphold vigorously—that their head belongs to the generation of the *fathers* of the other segment heads.

We need not analyse the internal organization of these last-mentioned segments of Lɛbhtiis yir. With variations of detail they duplicate the plan of Nəpugzabər yir. The segments are homologous with one another; their sub-segments are constructed on the same plan; and so, on a bigger scale, is the greater lineage which embraces all of them. Bakolog yidɛm within Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, like Zoobən yidɛm within Nəpugzabər yidɛm, is relatively senior to its brother-segments, and Nədɛyər biis, though a segment of a very narrow span compared with the other segments of Lɛbhtiis yir, is nevertheless co-ordinate with them.

[597] of it—are genealogically and socially united by reference to the patricentral *yir* and the patrilineal line, and similarly divided into distinct segments by reference to their respective matricentral *dugət*. This is the pattern on which lineage segmentation is based. Again, what is a joint family in one generation generally splits, as the children grow up, into two or more joint families in the next generation. They then constitute what we have called an expanded family.

[1] The founding ancestor, Lɛbhtiis, of this lineage should not be confused with his living descendant of the same name, previously mentioned. In the genealogies given in this chapter Lɛbhtiis the ancestor is distinguished by an asterisk.

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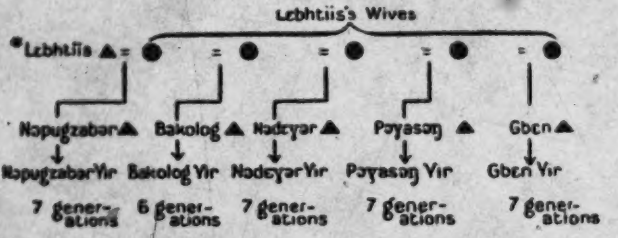
Diagrammatically, the agnatic filiation of the branches of Lɛbhtiis yir (or biis) can be represented as follows:



These five segments form a set of co-ordinate segments, all except Bakolog yidɛm reckoning seven generations inclusively between their present lineage heads and their common ancestor, Lɛbhtiis. Their corporate unity and common interests are symbolized by the ancestor shrine dedicated to the 'fathers' (*banam*) of the lineage, culminating in Lɛbhtiis. This is the *bɔyar* of Lɛbhtiis, the *banam bɔyar* (shrine of the forefathers) held by the head (*kpeem*) of the whole lineage, who may be a member of any of the five *dugət*. In 1934 the head of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, Naandɔmər, who was also head of his own segment of Nɔpugzabər yiri died, and as his final funeral rites were not immediately performed, the *banam bɔyar* remained in the custody of his son, who carried out the duties of head of the whole lineage in his late father's name. Naandɔmər's prospective successor as *kpeem* of Lɛbhtiis yir was Yinyɛla, the *kpeem* of Bakolog yir.

Each segment also has its particular *dugni bɔyar* (shrine of the 'room'). This, as will be explained presently, is known as its 'mothers'' *bɔyar* (*manam bɔyar*)—the shrine of its eponymous founding ancestor among the sons of Lɛbhtiis and his mother—the symbol of its differentiation, by reference to maternal origin, from its brother (*sunzɔ*) segments of the same descent, and of its specific corporate unity and identity in contraposition to those other segments.

Each segment tends to form a coherent residential cluster, situated on land which has been owned by its members for several generations, and in close proximity to the graves of their ancestors. The lineage as a whole tends to form a local aggregate, though a somewhat looser one than any of its segments. But not all the members of the lineage reside in Puhug, or at Tongo, at a given time. There are its married *pɔyayabəlis* (women members) and absent male members. In Nɔpugzabər yiri two young men were away in 1934, one farming in Mampurugu, another working somewhere in the colony; three of the younger 'sons' of Bakolog yir were away at Kumasi, where they had been for several years. One subsegment of Pɔyasɔŋ yidɛm has been established at Yamələg for a generation or so; and several members of the other two segments were away in Mampurugu and Ashanti.

Numerically Nadɛyər yir is exceptionally small, for it has only eleven male members. The other segments have between twenty and thirty male members each, counting infants as well. Numbers, we must again emphasize, do not in any way affect the status of a lineage or the rights

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613 and duties vested in it. Nɔdeyɔr yidem suffer no jural or ritual disabilities because they are so much inferior in numbers to their brother segments.

The Principle of Segmentation in the Lineage

There are two factors of great importance in the dynamics of the lineage system: the principle of segmentation in the lineage and the connexion between lineage aggregation and locality.

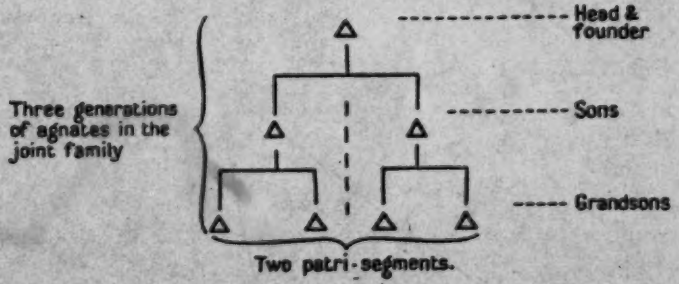
A striking characteristic of the Tale lineage is the rigorous precision with which its members fall into a set of hierarchically articulated segments, of homologous form but all exactly differentiated both genealogically and functionally (cf. Ch. III). This segmentary differentiation of the lineage follows the pattern of the family even to nomenclature. For the lineage grows out of, and through the medium of, the family, and throughout its existence a lineage develops uniformly, so that it preserves the form in which it was originally moulded.

To put it more accurately, a lineage grows by continuous internal differentiation in successive generations. It grows by the continuous multiplication of its parts, not by the mere accretion of new members. And this takes place by the splitting up of its cells, the minimal segments, into new minimal segments in successive generations. This process follows the lines of cleavage laid down in the joint family.

596 The polygynous joint family forms an integral unit with respect to its male element, the group of agnates upon which it is based and which gives it stability and continuity. This unity of the joint family is summed up in the concept of the patricentral 'house' (*yir*). But it is a unity superimposed upon a strict cellular differentiation into matricentral 'rooms' (*dugɔt*), each centred upon a wife.

613 596 The group of male agnates in the joint family constitutes an effective minimal lineage at a given time. Each male is a potential agnatic line; a pair of brothers are two potential segments of a lineage. In terms of their common patrilineal descent this group of males forms a single corporate unit. This is the essential *yir*. But this unity contains within itself two sets of cleavages: firstly, a stratification by generations, and secondly, a differentiation by descent. The generation principle acts in this way (cf.

Hypothetical Genealogy, I



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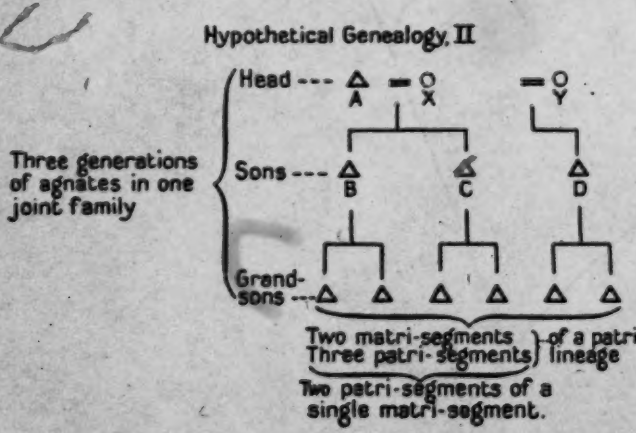
the hypothetical genealogy, I): Two brothers who are distinct as individuals are identified with reference to their common father; in all social activities in which they take part as the *sons* of their father they are, as it were, merged. During their father's lifetime they have, in fact, no independent jural status, but are, to speak figuratively again, submerged in his jural personality. Their sons, if the joint family survives as a unit for another generation, will be divided into two patrilateral groups with reference to their respective fathers, but fused into a single jural and economic as well as genealogical unit with reference to their grandfather. In this way the stratification of the effective minimal lineage into generations automatically splits it into patri-segments.[1]

Simultaneously, however, the centrifugal influence of the *dug* is at work. Brothers by the same father may have different mothers. Among the Tallensi this carries with it an emphatic affective discrimination. Half-brothers (*sunzɔ*, pl. *sunzɔp*) are divided by a wedge of sentiment which arises not only out of their independent emotional ties with their particular mothers, but also out of the structural, economic, and moral relations of the *dugɔt* within the *yir*. It reflects the social autonomy of the *dug* in relation to other *dugɔt* of the *yir* and the polarity of *dug* and *yir*. Conversely, full (*soog*) brothers have the most intimate bond in the whole gamut of Tale social relations, a bond implying an identity of interests, an emotional cohesion, and mutual loyalty so great as to override any kind of personal or social variance.[2] Thus, within the joint family, maternal origin (*ma dɔŋam*, lit. 'mother's bearing') may divide the sons of one man in sentiment and by an additional index of descent. The patrilateral unit is segmented into incipient matrilateral segments.

What happens in the next generation can best be seen from the following hypothetical genealogy:



[1] This terminology is borrowed from Daryll Forde, *Marriage and the Family among the Yakō*, L. S. E. Monographs on Anthropology, No. 5.

[2] Cf. my paper 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure', *Africa*, xiv, 7, 1944, for a discussion of the concept of *soog*.

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596

We assume a joint family containing three generations of male agnates—the head, his three sons, and his six grandsons, and we neglect the maternal origins of the latter. The six grandsons are divided into three equal patri-segments with reference to their respective fathers, and form a single corporate lineage with reference to their common grandfather. But they are genealogically split into two segments with reference to their respective *grandmothers*; and one of these matrilaterally defined segments (matri-segments) can be split into two patri-segments, of a lower order. Patrilateral origin and matrilateral origin work in polar opposition to each other. An agnatic group united by their patrilateral origin can be subdivided in accordance with their matrilateral origin; and vice versa, an agnatic group united by reference to their matrilateral origin can be subdivided by closer patrilateral origin.

Note that this is not a question of matriliny versus patriliny. Matrilateral origin works as a factor of cleavage only within a patrilineal group, in contradistinction to strict patriliny. Either focus may be the critical one in a given situation; but the other is not thereby obliterated; it merely becomes latent. The pattern operative here is that of the joint family. Patri-segment and matri-segment are related as *yir* and *dug* in the joint family, matri-segment and matri-segment as *dug* and *dug*. They are, indeed, nothing other than the parallel, in the structure of the unending lineage, of the balance of forces that characterizes the joint family. Members of one matri-segment are the offspring of one *dug*, members of one patri-segment may be the offspring of several *dugət*. The natives use the terms *yir* and *dug* to define the relations of lineage segments to one another. *Dug*, then, always bears the implication of a cohesive integral segment within the fissile *yir*. It stands for solidarity as opposed to the latent divisions in the *yir*, obviously reflecting its primary sense of the irreducible, uncleavable matricentral cell within the potentially divided *yir*.

Segmentation by matrilateral lines in the nuclear lineage plays a very important part in the development of both the joint family and the lineage. Economic, jural, and affective relations in the joint family are influenced by matrilateral (*dug*) affiliation; and when in course of time a joint family splits up, fission takes place in the first instance between matri-segments. Members of the same *dug* hold together longer than members of different *dugət*. Thus, two full brothers (*soog*, pl. *saarət*) continue to live in the same homestead, to farm together, to be jurally and ritually one, long after two half-brothers (*sunzɔp*) have found it necessary to separate. Often the split, which inevitably comes between separate lines in the nuclear lineage, is retarded in the case of *soog* brothers, and does not take place until their death. Children of *soog* brothers even after fission have closer ties than children of half-brothers.

These principles of segmentation are not merely a method of genealogical classification of individuals, but an indispensable regulator of corporate activities, operating at every level of lineage organization. This requires the preservation of the names of all relevant ancestors and ancestresses, but genealogical classification has no meaning except as a shorthand for the many and complex relations of individuals and groups.

The living members of a lineage are continually experiencing, in their

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daily life, the antithesis between patrilateral and matrilateral ties in the joint family. There is also the principle of the continuity and identity of the lineage. Members of the same lineage are identified with one another and with their lineal ascendants. Tallensi think of a lineage as a continuous, even eternal, group, a unit persisting through time as well as existing at a given time. A particular lineage to-day is the same lineage that it was at its inception two, three, or *x* generations ago. Segments of a clan or maximal lineage have the same structural position relatively to one another as they had in the beginning, only on a different scale; and in the beginning segmentarily related lineages sprang from brothers. As these founding ancestors were related, so are their contemporary agnatic descendants related. Hence co-ordinate segments of a lineage are described as *sunzɔp* ('brothers by the same father'), and the bonds of brotherhood (*sunzɔt*) are the nucleus and prototype of the bonds between co-ordinate segments. Two co-ordinate segments whose founding ancestors were full (*soog*) brothers have closer ties than similar co-ordinate segments descended from a pair of half-brothers. The lineage is always growing, but can never break the unchanging frame laid down at its beginning. It is almost as if a single person has undergone a quantitative metamorphosis with the passage of generations.

Lineage ties cannot lapse or be renounced. A maximal lineage once established can never split into two or more independent (i.e. mutually exogamous) maximal lineages, as in some other areas of Africa, and territorial dispersion does not break the lineage tie, even after many generations. In fact, the whole stream of Tale social life emphasizes and reinforces the sense of lineage continuity, and of the identification of members of a lineage with one another, with their predecessors, and with their prospective successors. This is the basis of the corporate unity and solidarity of the lineage, and of the lineal transmission of rights and duties, ritual observances, office, property, and debts; and for this reason any member of a lineage can represent any other member, living or dead, or the whole lineage, in relation to other lineages of a like sort. This, too, underlies the usage by which members of a lineage can refer to their founding ancestor either as their 'father' (*ba*) or as their 'ancestor' (*yaab*), a term which denotes any patrilineal ancestor beyond and including the grandfather. It explains the conception of the lineage progenitrix—the founding ancestor's mother—as the 'mother' (*ma*) of the lineage. It must be added that even when a lineage is envisaged as a *dug* deriving from its progenitrix, it takes its name from her son, as its agnatic founding ancestor as a branch of a more inclusive lineage.

The rules of lineage segmentation can be summed up as follows: Whenever a lineage is envisaged as an inclusive corporate unit embracing two or more subordinate segments, it is identified by reference to its founding *ancestor*, as the starting-point of its descent. It is thought of as a *yir*, house, 'the children of one father (*ba yɛni biis*)', on the model of the patricentral joint family (*yir* in the primary sense) in which the offspring form a single genealogical and social unit with reference to their common father. Its focal ancestor shrine is designated the '*bɔyar* of the fathers (*banam bɔyar*)', a notion that stresses the dominance of the father-figure

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613 778 in the unity of the patrilineal descent group and in the coherence of the family. But when a lineage is visualized as a set of segments, these are differentiated by reference to their respective *progenitrices*, just as in the joint family the offspring can be subdivided in accordance with their maternal origins. The focal ancestor shrine of each segment is then called 'the *bɔɣar* of the mothers (of the segment) (*manam bɔɣar*)'. It is identical in form with the 'fathers' *bɔɣar*' but complementary to it in function. Its name stresses the predominance of matrilateral origin in the differentiation of the segments of a lineage, by contrast with the patricentral lineage as a whole. Tallensi speak of a 'mothers' *bɔɣar*' as being the shrine of the segment's founding ancestor and his mother, by contrast with the 'fathers' *bɔɣar*', which they say is the shrine of the founding ancestor of the lineage only. But they recognize that a 'mothers' *bɔɣar*' will in the course of time become a 'fathers' *bɔɣar*' when the segment undergoes internal differentiation into sub-segments, and may function as a 'fathers' *bɔɣar*' if the segment is already so differentiated. When a segment of a lineage is thus distinguished from co-ordinate segments of the same lineage, it is also implicitly contrasted with the whole lineage. It is thought of as a matri-segment, though named after its founding ancestor, and is described as a 'room', *dug*—'the children of one mother (*ma yeni biis*)'—of the 'house', *yir*, on the model of the joint family in which the matricentral *dug* is a segment of the patricentral *yir*.

613 Maternal origin (*ma dɔɣam*) thus has significance only within the frame of patrilineal descent, as the polar opposite of paternal origin (*ba dɔɣam*). Taken by itself, every lineage, no matter what its span or order may be, has only one founding ancestor and one progenitrix, this man's mother. The progenitrix of a lineage becomes significant only when it is considered in conjunction with other lineages of the same descent. Both morphologically and functionally every lineage represents an equilibrium based on the polarity of maternal filiation and patrilineal descent which runs through the whole genealogical structure of Tale society.

[778] Obviously any segment of a lineage which comprises two or more sub-segments can function as a *dug* in one context or situation and as a *yir* in another. Its focal ancestor shrine thus functions as a *manam bɔɣar* in one context and as a *banam bɔɣar* in another. In principle a maximal lineage of wide span must always act as a *yir*—and hence its focal ancestor shrine is always a *banam bɔɣar*; but by a stretch of the term it may be referred to as a *dug* when someone wishes to lay special stress on its genealogical unity and corporate solidarity in contrast to other similar units. The [682] murder of a fellow member of the same maximal lineage is, for instance, always dealt with as 'an affair of the room (*dugni yɛl*)', which stringently excludes reprisals.

A few maximal lineages have so narrow a span, due, no doubt, to the extinction of collateral lines, that they function as medial or inner lineages (wide *dugɔt*), a distinction that will be clearer presently. Thus the maximal lineage of Gundaat is not subdivided into ritually and jurally differentiated major segments. Its head, the Gundaat-Bɔyarna'ab, explained this in a manner which shows how clearly many Tale elders grasp the mechanics of their own social structure. 'We have not yet achieved

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sunɔɔt (division into brother (patri-) segments)', he said, 'but we shall eventually do so. Our line of descent has not yet gone far enough, for we are all the children of one woman (i.e. the descendants of a common progenitrix not very far back). A woman's offspring do not split up, it is a man's offspring that split (*Bumpɔk dɔyam pu bɔkɔra, buraa dɔyam m-bɔkɔt*).' In fact, Gundaatdem form a lineage of rather narrow span considering the number of ascendant generations which they reckon to their founding ancestor.

Incidentally the Bɔyarna'ab's statement brings out vividly the native conception of a lineage as a perpetual entity, 'going on (*kyɛŋ sa*)' for ever, unitary and identical beneath the surface of its changing personnel, the 'children of one woman (or one man)' as long as it lasts.

According to this scheme, in the set of lineages we have been analysing, Nɔpugzabɔr yidem, the agnatic descendants of Nɔpugzabɔr, constitute one of the five *dugɔt* of the *yir*, Lɛbhtiis yidem, which in turn is a *dug* of the section (*yizug*) of Puhug, and this in its turn is a *dug* of the sub-clan of Tongo. Nɔpugzabɔr yir, again, may in certain situations be regarded as consisting of two *dugɔt*, Yidaan biis and Zoobɔn biis; and as Tɔbɔg and Dɔbil are *soog* brothers, their agnatic descendants will form a single matricentral segment, with greater cohesion than Yidaan biis.

Though *dug* and *yir* are relative concepts—relative both to each other and to the particular situation in which a given order of lineage segmentation is critical—there is a sense in which *dug* has a more precise connotation. As usual in Tale social organization no rigorous criterion can be found for this. It can be defined only in dynamic terms. Tallensi tend to think of the field of lineage relations as made up of three broad zones: the zone of clanship,[1] as when a man says, 'I am a Tongo man'; within this zone, the zone of section (*yizug*) relations, as when a Tongo man says, 'I am a Puhug man'; and within this zone, the zone of *dug* relations, which lies between the limits of the major segment of the *yizug* to which the individual belongs, on the one hand, and a level of segmentation of about the order of Doohraan yidem—that is, with a common ancestor placed about five generations back, on the other. Thus, if a man says of another member of his clan, 'We are *dugdem* (members of the same *dug*)', one can infer that he is thinking of a lineage segment of an order between that of Doohraan yidem and that of Lɛbhtiis yidem of Tɔŋ-Puhug, though the exact genealogical extension of the lineage intended will vary from clan to clan.

This notion of the *dug*, to which we have given a purely morphological formulation, is a reflex of the configuration of social interests that regulate the corporate functions of the lineage. The zone of clanship is correlated with interclan and intersettlement political and ritual relations, and with the maximum extension of the rule of exogamy. The zone of *yizug* relations is correlated with intra-clan political and ritual relations, with the aliquot distribution between segments of the clan of rights to politico-ritual offices, and with the complementary rights and duties of the major segments of the clan, upon which the maintenance of its structural equilibrium depends. The zone of *dug* relations corresponds to a field

[1] Cf. Chapter IV.

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571 of closer common interests. It is related to the *yizug* as the *yizug* is to the
613 clan. At the limit it marks off the widest lineage within which there is a strong feeling of moral solidarity, a tendency for corporate unity to prevail in all circumstances, and a strong sense of undivided common interests. Beyond this range, in the zone of section relations and in that of clanship, corporate unity and solidarity tend to be a function of politico-ritual interdependence and of a balance between the competitive interests and the obligatory bonds of reciprocity of the major segments of the clan.

582 At Tongo the widest range of the *dug* in this definitive sense is a lineage
613 segment of the order of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. This is constantly shown in economic life, as when a man invites his neighbours to a collective hoeing party or to help him build a new house. Then all the members of his widest *dug* feel bound to turn out, but not members of other *dugət* of the same section. Members of other sections will not be asked to come at all, and if one or two turn out it will be because they have personal ties of matrilateral kinship with the man issuing the invitation. It appears similarly in all other concerns of the individual which require corporate support. It is shown in the incidence of marriage prohibitions. Tallensi may not, according to strict rule, marry cognatic kin of any degree whatsoever. A man may not marry a daughter of his maternal uncle's lineage (*ahəb yiri*). But the restriction is limited to his mother's widest paternal *dug*. Thus a man whose mother belongs to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Tɔŋ-Puhug would not be allowed to marry another daughter of this *dug*, but he can—and innumerable cases show that this often happens—marry a daughter of another *dug* of Puhug.

613 Dissension occurs between segments of such a *dug* now and then, but
[578] this arouses severe reprobation. Members of the *dug* feel it as a direct threat to their well-being, in a way that they do not feel conflict between such *dugət* to be; they feel it as verging on the sinful, challenging the wrath of the ancestor spirits, whereas conflict between such *dugət* or between sections, though morally reprehensible, is not mystically dangerous. Within this *dug* sexual relations between a member and the wife of
[835] one of his agnates are branded as incest, and produce a serious if not
[837] irreparable rupture in the unit; and sexual relations between classificatory brother and sister meet with strong censure. Beyond this range sexual relations between a man and the wife of a clansman are merely adulterous, a violation of clan solidarity, not a sin; and intercourse with a clan sister is not censured. These distinctions go back to one fundamental principle. The wide *dug* marks the widest range within which differences of generation and birth order are recognized for jural and ritual purposes; beyond that range these differences are not recognized. The lower limit of the *dug* corresponds to a segment of about the order of Doohraan yidɛm. This narrow *dug* frequently forms the core of an expanded family; it determines the widest field within which domestic relations prevail. Its members have differentiated person-to-person relations, based on the recognition of generation differences and proxy-parenthood, as well as corporate lineage relations. Their moral bonds are correspondingly stronger than in the wide *dug*, though of the same kind. Within this unit sexual intercourse with a sister arouses very strong reprobation, and

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sexual relations with a brother's or father's wife is a grave sin. What is more important, the solidarity of this *dug* very often rests on a common economic interest in patrimonial land, to which every male member of the lineage is a potential heir. This common interest in land gives the cohesion of the narrow *dug* a foundation upon which its moral solidarity, reinforced by the close bonds of sentiment its members have with one another, rests so firmly as to make it almost infrangible. The narrow *dug* is the widest lineage unit that always stands together like one man, right or wrong. Dissensions between its members are regarded as personal quarrels even when they follow the lines of genealogical cleavage within it. However acrimonious they may be, they are not permitted to divide the unit into mutually hostile segments.

Neither the wide nor the narrow limits of the *dug* can be fixed by a count of ascendant generations. The narrow *dug* may place its founding ancestor from four to six generations up the tree of ascent, the wide *dug* from five to seven generations back, reckoning from its present living head inclusively. It varies from clan to clan, the dimensions of the *dug* being always relative to the span and the degree of internal segmentation of the maximal lineage of which it forms a segment. As we have seen, there are maximal lineages like Gundaat which are so little segmented that they still function as wide *dugət*. Furthermore, a unit that is counted as a *dug* to-day may in a generation or two segment into two or more *dugət*. And it must be remembered also that in composite clans the section (*yizug*) is genealogically a maximal lineage, so that the *dug* constitutes a major segment of a maximal lineage.[1]

Thus the *dug* is a flexible unit and more difficult to visualize than the maximal and minimal lineages. It cannot, like them, be isolated by a morphological criterion; we identify the *dug* only when it emerges in social action.

It will simplify our analysis and save some confusion if we give a name to the *dug* in the context of the lineage structure. This is justifiable as well as expedient, for in a particular clan the *dug* has a determinate lineage span and segmentary order at any given time. We shall therefore use the terms 'medial lineage or segment' for what we have called the wide *dug*, and 'inner lineage or segment' for the *dug* in its narrow limits. We thus have a hierarchy of lineage segments: the effective minimal lineage or segment, the nuclear lineage or segment, the inner lineage or segment, the medial lineage or segment, the section or major segment, the maximal lineage.

[1] In many maximal lineages we find an intermediate grade of *dug* which is less closely integrated than the narrow *dug*, but more so than the wide *dug*. In diachronic terms it readily falls into place as a phase in the process of internal differentiation by which the narrow *dug* develops into a wide *dug*. In the set of lineages we have been considering the segment of Bakolog yidəm of Lɛbhtiis yidəm behaves like a *dug* of this sort. It has a somewhat wider span than Doohraan yidəm, but a powerful contributory cause has been the personality of the *dug* head, Yinyɛla, whose actions have led the heads of the effective minimal lineages to reject his headship on several occasions and to stress the relative autonomy of their sub-segments in consequence.

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[p.206]

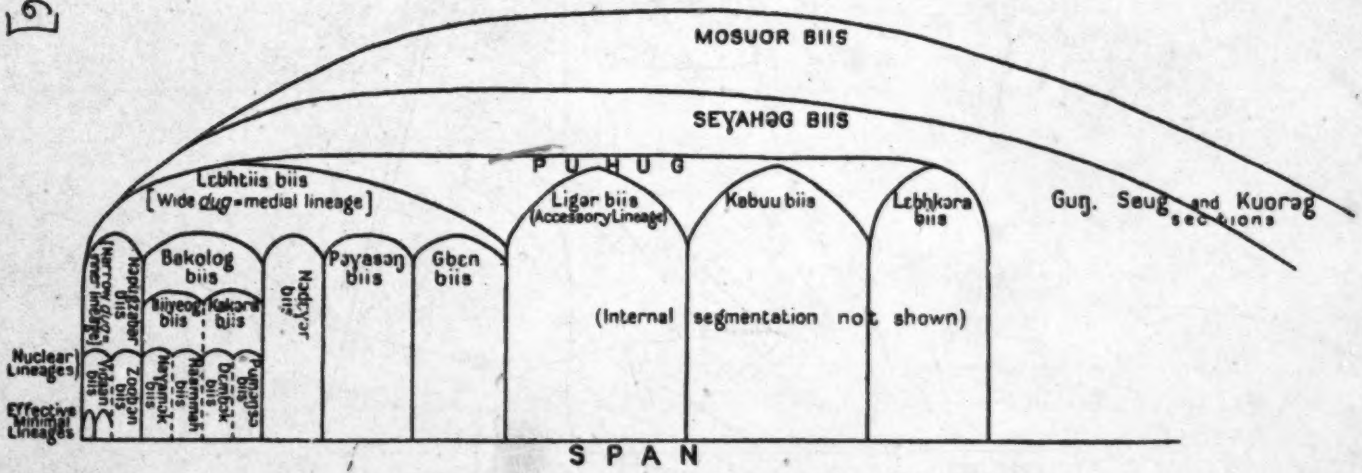

Diagram showing the internal segmentation of Təŋ-Puhug

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Lineage Grouping and Local Grouping

613 We come now to the question of the connexion between lineage
621 grouping and locality. A lineage like Nəpugzabər yiri, though its span
596 is comparatively small, exhibits all the important principles of lineage structure and will suffice as a crucial example.

In all the old-established settlements we find a very close correlation between lineage proximity and residential proximity among the members of the clan who live there. Close agnates tend to live near one another, so that residential proximity is almost a measure of lineage proximity. A segment of small span tends to be a close residential cluster, and segments of larger span, up to the major segments of a maximal lineage, tend to form residential blocks.

We can see this most readily if we look again at the residential dispersion of a group of agnatically related joint families, bearing in mind that the men of a joint family form a lineage. For as the homestead is the material integument of the living structure of the joint family, so is the localization of the lineage, growing out of the spatial arrangement of the homestead, the spatial counterpart of the lineage structure.

592 As will be remembered (see p. 199), the elementary case is that of two
602 full (*soog*) brothers, who often continue to occupy a single homestead
596 long after they have set up separate families. Each will have more or less self-contained quarters, but the homestead will have only one gateway (*zaŋsr*), one cattle-yard (*sapak*), and one room for the family head (*zɔŋ*), signifying that it is a single homestead. Half-brothers (*sunzɔp*) may share a homestead in this way, but they usually separate more distinctly when they have growing families. Each will have his own gateway, &c., and party walls divide his section of the homestead completely from those of his brothers, making it what may be called a semi-detached homestead. Such a set of semi-detached homesteads may house a man and his mature first-born son, or a man and his deceased brother's sons. Sometimes two or more ortho-cousins (brothers, in native terminology) live thus side by side.

613 More usually, however, men whose nearest common ancestor is a grand-
621 father occupy completely separate dwellings, often very near to one another. Men whose nearest common ancestor is a great-grandfather never have permanent homes adjoining one another in this semi-detached way. These conditions of residence signalize successive stages of segmentation as the effective minimal lineage expands and splits into new effective minimal lineages. But what residential arrangements will prevail in a particular lineage segment depends, also, upon other circumstances, the most important of which are the economic and religious relations, and the character and disposition of the individuals concerned. Residential collocation is not a simple function of lineage relationship. There is a *tertium quid* linking them: the combined effect of land tenure, on which the whole economy of the household rests, and of the ancestor cult. For example, when a joint family splits, the man who leaves the ancestral home usually builds a homestead for himself on land belonging to the

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613 621 nuclear lineage; but this land may be some distance from the ancestral home, owing to the scattering of holdings.

Looking at it from the native point of view, we should say, not that individuals tend to live near one another because they are agnatic kin, but that all lineages down to the effective minimal lineage tend to be tied to localities; and the more closely lineages are related, the greater is the spatial propinquity of their dwelling areas. The distribution of households is not rigidly parallel to the lineage structure at a given time. Mere spatial proximity cannot be directly translated into terms of lineage proximity. There is a diachronic element as well. Kurug's homestead (No. 6), for example, is nearer to Pumaan's (No. 5) in yards and feet than to Lebhtiis's; but Kurug is closer to Lebhtiis than to Pumaan in lineage. This is due chiefly to changes in the internal structure of their respective nuclear lineages in the last twenty or thirty years. The spatial relations of homesteads to one another reflect lineage relations in their diachronic aspect.

The Concept of the Lineage Home

613 621 778 Lineages tend to be tied to specific localities even if many of their members are permanently or temporarily away from the lineage home. Some representatives of the lineage will generally continue to reside near the ancient home where the spirits of the ancestors still dwell. The *daboog*, the site of the original home of the lineage, the first dwelling-place of its founding ancestor, is a hallowed spot. It is identified by reference to ancestral land and to the graves of the ancestors. These are the fixed things. Homesteads are not eternal. Their collocation reflects the structure of the lineage at a given time; but it changes as the composition and segmentation of the lineage alters. Whenever an alteration of this sort occurs, there is a corresponding reshuffle in the housing arrangements. New homesteads are erected, old homesteads replanned and rebuilt or abandoned. A lineage being an organic unit has, in native eyes, but one home (*yir*), though the material embodiment of this home is distributed at any given time. The *daboog* of the lineage of Nɔpugzabɔr yidem, the original homestead site of their ancestor Nɔpugzabɔr, is on what was in 1934 the home farm of the head of the lineage, Deemzeet, a stone's throw from his gateway. The graves of Nɔpugzabɔr and his sons, and a tree which sprouted on Nɔpugzabɔr's grave and is believed, therefore, to enshrine his spirit, mark the spot where his gateway (*zanɔr*) stood.

From this arises the concept of the lineage *zanɔr*. All the homesteads of its members together make up the lineage home (*yir*), and this home has its single gateway (*zanɔr*), the lineage *zanɔr*. The notion is pre-eminently symbolical, but its material embodiment is the homestead of the lineage head, and therefore, specifically, the gateway of his homestead. It applies to all levels of lineage organization, up to the maximal lineage. In a maximal lineage the site of the founding ancestor's homestead is generally a sacred spot, often marked by the erection on or near it of a [554] miniature room to represent the ancestral *zɔŋ*. This room is one of the shrines connected with the lineage *bɔyar*, and its custody is vested in a

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segment of the lineage whose head always takes the title of *Yikpɛmdaan*[1] and has the duty of sacrificing to the collective ancestors of the lineage on behalf of all its members. Among clans that have tendaanas the senior tendaana often has to build his homestead on the site of the founding ancestor's homestead; and when a tendaana dies his successor takes possession of the ancestral homestead and his children move out. But many other arrangements exist all serving the same end of keeping alive the idea of the lineage home.

In the lineage we are discussing the three homesteads of the members stand on ancestral land quite close to the graves of the lineage ancestors, Doohraan, Damtii, and Nɔpugzabɔr. When Deemzeet formally became the head of the lineage his homestead housed the lineage *bɔyar* and other shrines of its common ancestors, and his gateway became the lineage *zanɔr*. The ancestral graves of this lineage are actually on land owned by its members. This is not always the case. Changes in the ownership of land as the population shifts frequently result in the land surrounding the ancestral graves of a lineage-segment passing into the hands of members of another segment of the same lineage, sometimes even into the hands of members of a neighbouring clan. The spot continues, nevertheless, to be regarded as the *daboog* of the lineage whose ancestral graves lie there. The conception of the lineage home is split. For jural and social purposes it is the *de facto* home of the lineage, the place where its head actually resides. The site of the ancestral home, marked by the graves of the ancestors, comes to be regarded primarily as the religious focus of the lineage.

The Influence of Lineage Localization in the Social Life

This fact, that in the older settlements the core of a lineage is a locally organized unit, and that its location is associated with its ancestor spirits on the one hand and its patrimonial land on the other, moulds the entire life of its members. The corporate unity and identity of a lineage is a real and tangible thing when its male members can see one another every day, and when most of them, certainly most of their leading men, can gather together easily and in a very short time to consider and take action in affairs of common interest. Classificatory kinship is no mere formality where an individual's childhood companions are his or her own siblings and ortho-cousins of various degrees; where a man's daily intercourse is carried on chiefly with close agnatic kinsmen, and almost entirely with men of the same patrilineal descent, in his section or settlement; where a man can readily, and indeed is compelled to, by the fact of physical accessibility in a culture lacking rapid and indirect means of communication, have immediate and almost exclusive recourse to his patrilineal kin for help in economic activities, support in maintaining his rights or performing his duties, advice and guidance in the conduct of his life, or solace in misfortune. Ceremonial co-operation is not an empty formula

[1] Tallensi are poor etymologists and various equally plausible etymologies are suggested for this title. The most probable is that it is compounded of *yir*, house; *kpiim*, spirits of the dead, and *daana*, custodian or master. This can be translated 'Custodian of the House of the Spirits of the Lineage Ancestors'.

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where it always and necessarily brings together men of the same descent group, bound together not only by ties of blood but also by ties of residence, common interests, and common experience. The local concentration of the lineage in such close association with the graves of its ancestors and the land hallowed by their life and labour gives to the cult of the ancestors a binding power and directive force in the social life of the natives which is hardly equalled elsewhere in Africa. The like-mindedness, common values, mutual loyalties, sense of unity and continuity, so prominent in a lineage of small span and distinctive only to a lesser degree of lineages of greater span, can be translated directly into terms of contact, co-operation, and experience. So also the conflicts and rivalries that inevitably spring up in a human community, and occur as often in a Tale settlement as anywhere else in the world, have an additional significance, since they necessarily involve men who are kin to one another and belong to the same corporate unit. The principle of lineage representation and the concept of the equivalence of members of the same lineage have the maximum efficacy in these conditions.

The effect of the congruence between lineage ties and local ties is of no less importance for a woman than for a man. In childhood her closest playmates are the children of her father's inner lineage, that is, the children of her father's nearest neighbours, and their principal playground is the immediate vicinity of their parents' homesteads. Among her classificatory patrilineal relatives she knows best and depends most on the members of her father's inner lineage. Members of her father's medial lineage are next in order of importance for her, and more distant clansmen and clanswomen least important, though far from irrelevant. When she marries into another community she does not cease to belong to her natal clan. She maintains close ties with it, the most intimate being with the members of her father's inner lineage; and she thinks of these ties as ties with a corporate social unit, not with particular individuals only. Both to herself, her husband and his clansmen, and to her children, her 'father's house' (*ba yir*) is, in the broadest sense, her natal clan pictured as a local community, in a narrower sense, her father's medial lineage, thought of as a localized subdivision of her natal clan, in the narrowest sense her father's inner lineage thought of in the same way.

In her husband's home, too, the correlation of lineage proximity with local proximity enters continuously into the routine of her life. Her relations with the members of her husband's clan are graded in accordance with their lineage proximity to him. The men of her husband's clan with whom she has closest contact are her husband's nearest agnates and the nearest neighbours of her conjugal family. With him they form the segment of his clan which has the greatest jural interest in her and her children. If her husband dies, it is one of these men who is most likely to inherit her. The wives of all her husband's clansmen are nominally her co-wives or daughters-in-law; but in fact it is only the wives of his close agnates, women who are her nearest neighbours, whom she regards as effective classificatory co-wives and daughters-in-law. She and they will help one another in such tasks as floor beating or ceremonial cooking, and at critical times like a confinement or a death. She has bonds of

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comradeship with all women married into her husband's clan, owing to their common status as wives of the clan, but this bond is stronger with the wives of her husband's close agnates than with the wives of his distant agnates. It is most effective within the group of families built up round her husband's inner lineage, and becomes purely nominal outside the range of the group of families whose male members form a medial lineage.

Neighbourhood ties are *ipso facto* lineage ties, and therefore economic, religious, jural, and moral ties. The closer a man's neighbourhood ties with another, the more closely are they likely to be related by lineage and the greater are likely to be their common and mutual interests. A man's central field of social relationships is integral with his central field of spatial relationships. His range of physical communication with others is a function of his range of social relations, and is graded, both as to intensity and frequency of communication, in accordance with the gradation of his genealogical relationships. For, as we have previously noted, most men's lives are almost wholly tied to their natal settlements.

This close correlation between genealogical relationships and local relationships operates in the wide sphere of clanship as well as in the narrow sphere of individual conduct, in the corporate relationships of lineages and clans, no less than in the emotional bonds of individuals. We have seen how it emerges in the organization of the lineage, and its enormous importance in a person's relations with his patrilateral kin. It is equally significant in the establishment of affinal ties and in the efficacy of the ties of matrilateral kinship.

In this respect the Tallensi exhibit a feature of primitive society that has often been stressed: their overwhelming dependence on face-to-face communication and association in the organization of their collective life. Among the Tallensi it can be clearly seen that this is conditioned by their mode of economic life, their lack of the art of writing, and the absence of mechanical equipment and sources of power for transport, communications, and other technological purposes. But the student of Tale society cannot avoid the conclusion that social factors, in particular the complex of interrelated elements revealed in the narrow range of political and economic relations, the lack of a centralized political system and the dominance of genealogical connexions in all social relations, are the most important factors in the situation.

The Section

We can return now to our account of the lineage framework of Tongo.

Adjacent to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, between them and Gbizug, lies the cluster of homesteads of the assimilated lineage of Ligɔr yidɛm (see above, p. 57), homesteads Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, on our map. Lɛbhtiis yidɛm are the authentic lineage with which Ligɔr yidɛm are most closely linked, but they count as segments of equal order in the larger unit of the section (*yizug*). Another cluster of homesteads (Nos. 13, 14, 15, 16) belong to Kuŋkɔŋto'o yidɛm, the attached lineage reputed to be derived from a divorced sister's son (*tau bii*) of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. Both these accessory lineages have a number of male members living away from Tongo.

The structure of Puhug (see diagram, p. 212), the section (*yizug*) of which

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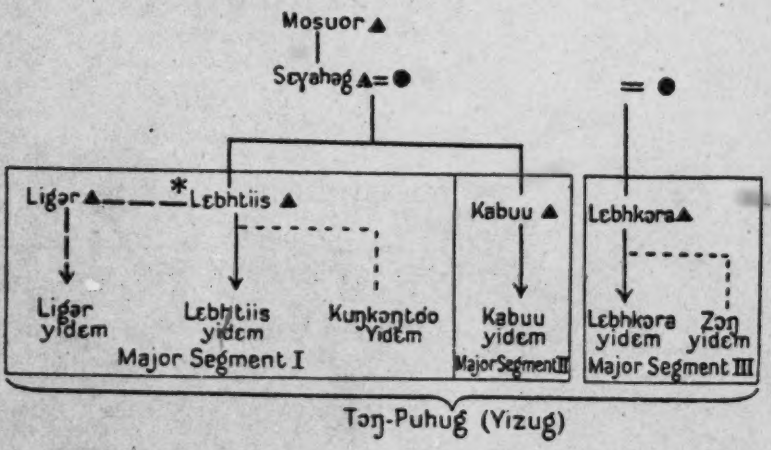
613 it forms a segment, is the structure of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm writ large. Dis-
621 counting the accessory lineages, Puhug comprises three major segments. It has two more lineages of the same order of segmentation as Lɛbhtiis yidɛm: Kabuu yidɛm and Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm. One segment of the former occupies the south-west or topmost (*zugmi*) corner of Puhug (homesteads Nos. 25, 26, 27), abutting on the mass of great boulders that lies between Puhug and the watercourse that separates it from Wakii. The other
[166] segment occupies the group of homesteads at Kumpɛyalɔyat. A minor branch, including the head of this segment, migrated to Yamɔlɔg some twenty years ago, and other members of it are settled at Gbambee, Woo, and in the outlying parts of Taleland, while some are abroad. Lɛbhkɔra yidɛm, together with their attached lineage, Zɔŋ yidɛm, live in the group of homesteads—Nos. 30, 31, 32, 34—adjacent to Kuorɔg. These three major segments of Puhug (reckoned as *dugɔt*, medial lineages, in this context) are agnatically related as follows:



——— Authentic segments
— — Assimilated Lineages
------ Attached Lineages

Lɛbhtiis yidɛm and Kabuu yidɛm are *soog* (full brother) segments, it will be noted, and though they are not considered to form a single *dug* within Puhug, they have somewhat closer ties than either has with their *sunzɔ* segment of Lɛbhkɔra biis, while Ligɔr yidɛm have closer ties with Lɛbhtiis yidɛm than with the others, on account of their special connexion with the former. In the economic, ritual, and jural concerns of the section all the segments have the same status and the same degree of relative autonomy. But Lɛbhtiis yidɛm are recognized as the senior branch, and so rank above the others. The head (*kpeem*) of Lɛbhtiis yir is *ipso facto* the *kpeem* of Puhug.

The lineage structure of the other three *yizugɔt* of Tongo follows the same

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plan; and the architecture of the sub-clan as a whole is that of the *yizug* on a larger scale. A skeleton genealogy (see p. 214) will suffice to show this.

Guŋ, Seug, and Kuorəg are constituted according to the same general plan as Puhug. But each section has features peculiar to itself, specializations of the general principles of *yizug* structure due to the particular genealogical constitution of each, and to the demographic and structural relations with one another of the four sections. This is characteristic of Tale social organization. Like the maximal lineages of a composite clan, co-ordinate segments of a maximal lineage are homologous with one another in structure, but frequently different in genealogical composition.

Viewed in terms of its own diachronic and local constitution, each is unique, its present form the precipitate of its own peculiar history. Thus Guŋ, as we have seen, is not a single local aggregate like Puhug. But the principle that lineage proximity and residential proximity go together prevails. Leaving aside those who have settled permanently or temporarily in outlying places, the Guŋdem at Guŋ proper are almost all Kəbər yidem. The centre of settlement of Siiyeŋ biis is Dekpieŋ. Bəɣayiedət yidem are most scattered; but each of its segments tends to be a small local aggregate, and wherever in outlying places a cluster of homesteads belonging to Guŋ men is formed—at Zoo, at Gbambee, and at Woo—these men are almost invariably members of a single minor segment of the lineage.

The three segments of Guŋ (excluding Nəŋsuur yidem, the assimilated lineage) are considered to be more closely united than the segments of Puhug because they have a single common progenitrix. They speak of themselves as 'members of one *dug* (*dug yɛni dɛm*)' in contraposition to the other sections of Tongo. Seug is the most homogeneous section of Tongo, both residentially and genealogically, for it consists of only one segment, of the same order as the component segments of the other *yizugət*. The members of Seug, too, speak of themselves as members of one *dug* in contraposition to the other three sections. Kuorəg is the most heterogeneous, genealogically, of the four sections. Its members are also more widely dispersed, most of them having moved to Gbambee in the past thirty or forty years.

Puhug and Kuorəg both show clearly how local association is a factor of section organization in a maximal lineage in the same way as it is a factor of clanship in composite clans. Genealogically, Lɛbhkəra yidem of Puhug are a lineage of the same order of segmentation as Seugdem; yet they do not, like the latter, constitute a separate *yizug*. Close local association with Puhug makes them a part of that section. Similarly, Yikpɛmdaan yir of Kuorəg on genealogical reckoning alone should rank as a section. Its founding ancestor is said to have been a kinsman (*mabii*), possibly a 'brother' but certainly not a son, of Mosuor, who accompanied him on his flight from Mampurugu. The head of this lineage, who has the hereditary title of Yikpɛmdaan, has a position of special dignity at Tongo. He is in one sense the senior elder (*kpeem*) among all the elders of the sub-clan. Yikpɛmdaan's high status is due to his hereditary ownership of a special shrine (*bɔɣar*), Zoonkpaləg, which is both his lineage *bɔɣar* (*banam bɔɣar*) and a clan *bɔɣar*, analogous to the External *Bɔɣar* of the Talis, for the whole of Tongo. It is the shrine

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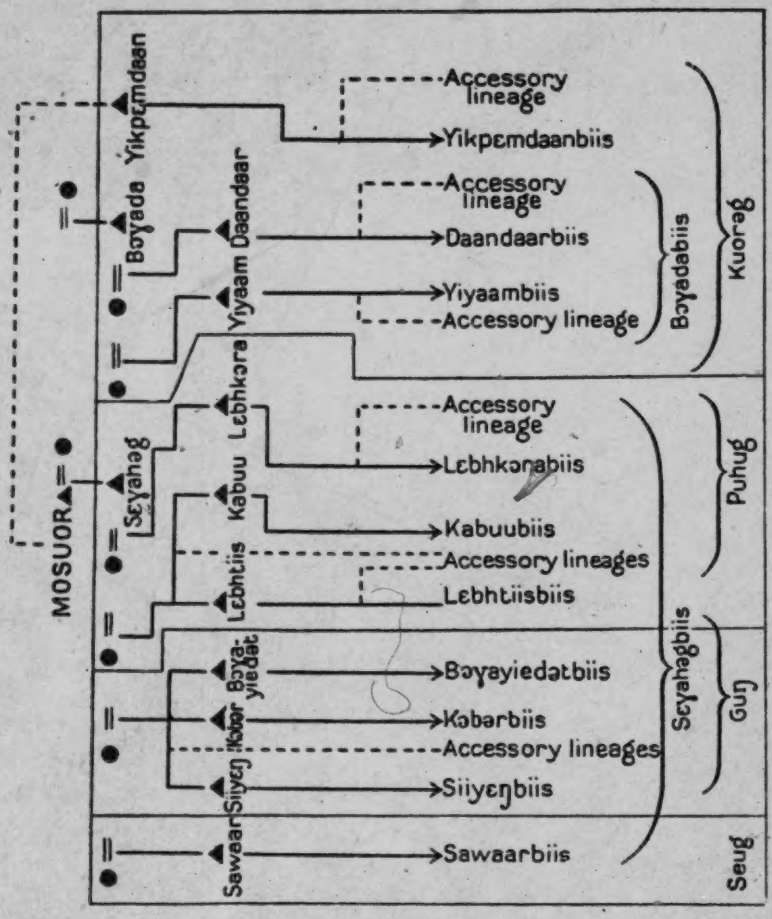

Note: Daandaar biis are often referred to as Yidaan biis, after a title held by their founding ancestor

[p.214]

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613 of all the ancestors of the whole maximal lineage, and it symbolizes
621 the 'gateway' (*zanɔr*) of the whole maximal lineage (cf. p. 208). The natives maintain that the original Yikpɛmdaan accompanied his kinsman Mosuor to Tongo as the custodian of this *bɔyar*, in virtue of which he is the *zanɔr kpeem*—the elder in charge of the lineage gateway—of the maximal lineage. Hence it is a common saying at Tongo that 'Yikpɛmdaan is not a Kuorəg man, but he belongs to the whole of this our Chief's House (*Yikpɛmdaan ka Kuorəg nit, u a ti Nayirɔ waabi nit*)'. Nevertheless, Yikpɛmdaan yidɛm are always reckoned as part of Kuorəg in the affairs of that section. Yikpɛmdaan himself acts as the senior elder of the section in jural and ritual affairs that concern it as a whole, superseding the *kpeem* of Bɔyada biis in virtue of his exalted status.

Segmentation and Equilibrium in the Sub-clan

By genealogical reckoning Tongo consists of two major segments: Sɛyahəg biis (Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug), and Bɔyada biis (Kuorəg), each with its accessory lineages. In some circumstances the unity of Sɛyahəg biis in contraposition to Bɔyada biis is recognized. This is the reason why Zəŋ yidɛm, the attached segment of Lɛbhkɔra biis of Puhug, are permitted to marry Kuorəgdɛm but not any members of Sɛyahəg biis, who are felt to be the widest lineage of which Zəŋ yidɛm form a segment. But there is a distinct tendency towards the obliteration of the sense of contra-
[782] position between Kuoreg and the rest of Tongo as the sentiment of unity, reflected in the conduct of accessory lineages at the great sacrifice to Mosuor in 1936, becomes stronger (see pp. 53–4). I have heard members of Zəŋ yidɛm say that it is not becoming (*de pu nara*) for them to marry into Kuorəg, even though it is no breach of the rule of exogamy to do so. In another decade or so they may well insist that it is not merely unbecoming but forbidden (*kih*), and it would then be a grave discourtesy for anyone at Tongo to remind them publicly of their indirect connexion with Mosuor biis by disputing this.

764 At funeral ceremonies this primary segmentation of Tongo often
613 emerges. Thus, when the funeral of Yɔrug Yin of Kuorəg was celebrated,
621 contingents of elders from all the other sections of Tongo, and from Zoo—coming as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy—as well as Soog (the clan adjacent to Kuorəg and the 'owners of the land' on which Kuorəg is situated) came in force to the second divination ceremony; for Yɔrug Yin had been the head of Bɔyada biis and headman of Kuorəg. But his son was a poor man and had to temper with economy the munificence that pride dictates
[273] on such occasions. So when the beer was brought for the guests, Zoodɛm
[554] and Soogdɛm were each given a medium-sized pot, and then one large pot was given to *Nayidɛm*, the 'people of the Chief's House', that is, the other three sections of Tongo reckoned as a unit in contraposition to Kuorəg. Had more beer been brewed, or had the *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy and the neighbouring clan not been present, each section would have received its own pot of beer. Similarly, at the funeral of Sayawuob of Puhug's mother, representatives of Zoo came to claim the forequarter (*bɔak*) of the cow slaughtered in her honour, which they were entitled to as *sunzɔp*-by-courtesy. This left only two *nundaas* (major portions, or

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764 quarters) for the other three sections of Tongo, since one of the hind
● 613 quarters (*gbɛr*) remains with the 'owner of the funeral', the man who is
621 celebrating it. Thus the genealogical cleavage between Kuorəg and the rest of Tongo asserted itself. Kuorəg was treated as the *sunzɔp* of the rest of Tongo and received a forequarter, the remaining hind quarter going to the other three sections. There are stories of intra-clan quarrels in the
[578] old days in which Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug banded themselves together against Kuorəg.

613 Nevertheless, in the corporate affairs of Tongo as a whole Kuorəg
621 emerges as a segment of the same order as the other three sections. It is one of the four co-ordinate sections (*yizugət*). A significant index of this is the fact that in all four sections nine generations of ascendants are reckoned inclusively between the present section heads (*yizug kpeem*) and Mosuor. No Tongo man, however profoundly versed in the traditions and customs of his clan, is aware of this, however. Tallensi never have occasion to work out the genealogical relations of all the minimal segments of a maximal lineage with one another.

A man's genealogical knowledge is built up gradually and piecemeal in the give and take of social life, by participation in jural, ritual, and ceremonial activities. But a man of wide experience knows the lineage ancestry of the component segments of his own *dug* as far as its founding ancestor; he will know who were the putative brothers of this man, the founding ancestors of the other major segments of his section, and their sons, the founding ancestors of large sub-segments like Nɔpugzabər yidem, in his section; and he will know the founding ancestors of the other *yizugət* of the clan, and possibly their sons; but he will not know the whole descent of other major segments of other sections.

The nine-generation ladder of ascent found at Tongo is an index of the structural differentiation and internal equilibrium of the clan. As we have already observed, the maximal lineage (and Tongo functions as a maximal lineage, though strictly speaking it is not one) is unalterably fixed. Its major segments cannot be altered in relation to one another by further segmentation of its minimal segments. Its internal equilibrium is a function of the relations between its major segments; and the same principle applies to each major segment. This is symbolized in the tree of ascent of the people of Tongo. The structure of the maximal lineage does not permit of the recognition of more than one generation between Mosuor and his nine putative grandsons. Following the simplest possible pattern of symmetrical lineage segmentation, all Mosuor's progeny are first divided into two major (matri-)segments in accordance with the stereotyped scheme of differentiation by reference to their progenitrices; and each of these is again segmented on the same principle. Kuorəg counts as a section of the same order as Puhug, Guŋ, and Seug in the corporate affairs of the whole sub-clan, because this is necessary for the equilibrium of the sub-clan. The internal differentiation of Sɛɣahəg biis has reached an advanced stage. The relative autonomy of the three sections that constitute it is now so great that they can only act together as equal partners. Each of these three sections has a corporate unity and common interests that sometimes bring it into conflict with the other two

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or with Kuorəg. They have no greater common interests uniting them in opposition to Kuorəg. Whenever they unite for action they do so in the service of the common interests of the whole sub-clan, and this necessarily includes Kuorəg. This involves a distribution of roles and responsibilities equally amongst all four sections (Puhug, Guŋ, Seug, and Kuorəg), which places them all on a footing of equality.

Demographic factors have perhaps contributed to this development, though its determining principles lie in the structure of the maximal lineage. I estimate the total population of Kuorəg (men, women, and children), including members of the section and their families who live at Gbambee and Biuŋ, at about 400. Numerically it is considerably less than half the size of Guŋ, less than three-quarters as large as Puhug, and barely bigger than Seug. Kuorəg occupies a correspondingly smaller area than any of the other sections.

These demographic conditions have, it may be conjectured, enhanced the effect of the forces operating to maintain a balance between the segments of the maximal lineage. Looking at Tongo as unit, we may compare it with an arch which stands firm as long as the thrust and counter-thrust of its component forces are balanced. But it is a living arch, the elements of which are in a continuous process of mutual adjustment controlled by the need to maintain the equilibrium of the whole. The same principle can be seen at work in the maximal lineage and in every segment of a maximal lineage down to the smallest, and that is why Kuorəg has been forced into the position of a segment co-ordinate with the other three sections of Tongo, even though it is genealogically super-ordinate to them. This is a necessary condition of its continuing to be a part of Tongo.

The analogy of the arch is particularly pertinent to the structural equilibrium of Tongo. For whenever the four sections co-operate in a ceremonial or jural situation involving the clan as a unit, Puhug and Kuorəg are grouped together in contraposition to Guŋ and Seug, also grouped together. It is shown in small things as well as big things. When, for instance, the beast offered at an important sacrifice or ceremonially slaughtered at a funeral is to be flayed, the elders of each section, as befits their equality of status in the maximal lineage, select two of their younger co-members to do the flaying. Then Puhug and Kuorəg take the left flank, Guŋ and Seug the right; the titbits (*siit-numəl*), which are the perquisite of the skinners, are divided equally between the two sides. Similarly at the initial divination for the Harvest Festival, Puhug and Kuorəg take one calabash of flour-water (*zɔm kuɔm*), Guŋ and Seug the other. Whenever the elders of all the sections gather in the chief's *zɔŋ*, that is how they sit—Puhug and Kuorəg on one side, Guŋ and Seug on the other.

The corporate activities and common interests in which the unity and solidarity of a maximal lineage are manifested vary according to the range of segments they mobilize and the degree to which participation in them is obligatory. Funerals and marriages are typical of situations in which there is a variable field of corporate action. Rights and duties associated with them are graded in accordance with lineage distance. The age,

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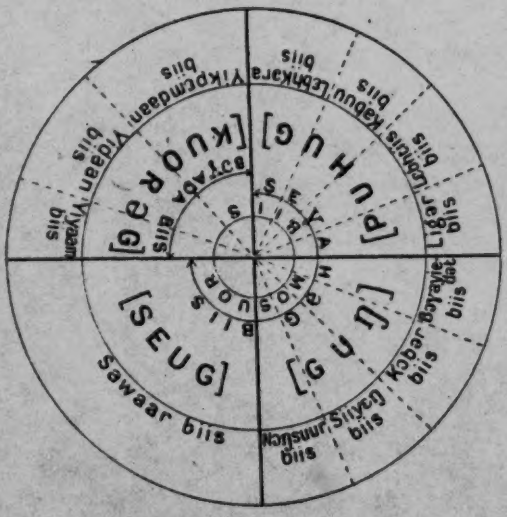
sex, station in life, character, and reputation of the deceased all influence the reactions of people to a death and the range of participation in the funeral ceremonies. Every death is the corporate concern of the deceased's medial lineage—his *dug* of the *yizug*. It is less stringently the corporate concern of the whole *yizug*. Funerals of old and important men evoke the participation of the whole clan or sub-clan, but it is clan solidarity and corporate obligation on the level of the section that draw *sunzɔ* sections to the ceremonies. Only the death of a chief, a tendaana, or other politico-ritual functionary, is the obligatory concern of every segment of the clan or maximal lineage. Funerals of women and young people or children impose no obligations on *sunzɔ* sections of the

Diagram showing internal segmentation of Tongo.

——— Thick lines mark off sections (*Yizugat*)

- - - - Broken lines mark off major segments of sections, that is medial lineages (*dugat*)



deceased's (or her husband's) section. Whether or not their representatives come to condole with the bereaved household or to take part in the burial and funeral ceremonies rests entirely with the individual members of these sections and depends on individual ties of neighbourhood, kinship, or friendship with the deceased's family and *dug*. A funeral, even that of a politico-ritual officer, is primarily the direct concern of every member of the deceased's segment of the clan or maximal lineage. It concerns *sunzɔ* segments only at the level of corporate relations, because every event that affects the existence and constitution of one part of the clan or maximal lineage impinges on its common interests.

We may contrast with this a corporate activity in a wider sense, such as the sacrifice to Mosuor at Tongo, to which we have several times referred, the Harvest Festival, or the communal hoeing of the chief's bush farm, which has become an established custom under British rule. The pivot of these activities is always the chief, who stands for the whole sub-clan and its common interests and values, and whose office transcends the cleavages inherent in its lineage segmentation. In these activities the

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four major segments of the clan have an equal role. All have the same obligations and the same rights, vested in them as corporate units defined in relation to the whole clan; and all the segments must participate in equal degree. A similar corporate activity in a clan like Zubiuŋ is a sacrifice to the External *Bɔyar*, Duunkpaləg.

The four sections of Tongo are equal and co-ordinate in political and jural matters. In religious matters of common interest Puhug is senior (*kpeem*) to the other sections. This is because Mosuor's grave and *bɔyar* and Sɛyahəg's grave and *bɔyar* are the exclusive charge of Puhug, whose section head (*yizug kpeem*) always has custody of these shrines and officiates in sacrifices to them.

The Local Embodiment of the Ritual Focus of the Sub-clan

Puhug was the original home (*daboog*) of Mosuor. There he dwelt beside Tɛndaan Gɛnət, the site of whose *daboog* is now the sacred dancing-ground of the *Giŋgaaŋ* Festival, hence called Giŋgaaŋ Puhug. This is the hub of Tongo as an enduring and stable local unit. Whatever vicissitudes the clan may suffer, whether it expands or contracts, however widely its members may be dispersed, Giŋgaaŋ Puhug remains for ever fixed and inviolable, the heart of the clan and the visible and consecrated sign of its existence and persistence. At the edge of Giŋgaaŋ Puhug is the grave of Tɛndaan Gɛnət, and nearby are the graves of the first ancestors of Mosuor-biis—Mosuor, Sɛyahəg, and Bɔyada—marking the sites where their homesteads stood. Thus the ritual and ideological focus of Tongo's corporate unity as a descent group (and the same rule applies to all Tale clans) is directly bound up with its physical counterpart, the local focus of Tongo's unity and identity. In clans that have tɛndaanas, it is usually the principal Earth shrine (*tɔŋgban*) that is the consecrated local focus of the clan.

Mosuor's grave, marked by an irregular flat heap of large stones, lies under an enormous old baobab tree which the people of Tongo say *is* Mosuor (see map of Tongo). On the side of the trunk facing the grave are signs of the sacrifices offered there—dirty streaks of dried blood and flour-water, and patches of fowl and guinea-fowl feathers stuck to the trunk with blood. It is a prominent landmark in Puhug, and a favourite shade tree for the people of the nearby homesteads. There the old men come and rest on hot afternoons, infants are put out to sit, well protected from the sun, while their mothers get on with the household work, and older children come to play or to swing in the branches. It is characteristic of the Tallensi that the people of Tongo treat their most sacred shrines in this realistic and matter-of-fact way in the context of everyday life. The tree is sacred, it is a *Bayar*, but it is also just a tree, whose ritual significance is not relevant except on a ritual occasion. Then it is treated with appropriate reverence. And this is true, also, of ancestral graves, which are often treated very casually and sometimes allowed to fall into such neglect that none but the elders of the lineage descended from him know exactly where a particular ancestor's grave is. Mosuor's grave, however, being of such outstanding ritual importance for the whole of Tongo, is more carefully kept and is always treated with respect.

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778 The graves of Sɛɣahəg and Bəɣada lie within a couple of minutes' walk
769 of each other and of Mosuor's baobab in Puhug. Though Bəɣada's grave is in the middle of the home farm of a Puhug man, its custody is vested in Kuorəg, whose head comes to sacrifice there periodically. Similarly Siiyɛŋ, Kəbər, and Bəɣayiedət, the ancestors of Guŋ and Dekpieŋ, lie buried at Guŋ proper, at the *daboog* of this *yizug*, though the majority of their descendants live at Dekpieŋ.

173 For the people of Tongo—and this also applies to all Tallensi except
764 the Hill Talis—the disposition of graves maps out the gradual increase or diminution in numbers of the clan or any segment of the clan through the generations, and its gradual territorial expansion or retraction. Thus Tɛndaan Gɛnət's house site and grave in the centre of Puhug are accepted as proof that the Gbizugdɛm lived there at the time of Mosuor's arrival and were gradually pushed out to their present location by the spreading of Mosuor's progeny. The founding ancestor of Zubiuŋ Yakəradɛm, Gɛnət's putative brother, is also believed to have lived at Puhug at that remote period, and they, too, are said to have been dispossessed by Mosuor biis. Similarly the location of Bəɣada's grave is proof to the natives that the growing numbers of Puhugdɛm caused his descendants to withdraw gradually into what is now Kuorəg.

Structure of the Clan Settlement among non-Namoos

613 Among Talis as well as Namoos in the older part of Taleland, the clan
621 settlement is built up round the lineage in this way. In composite clans
764 the tendency is always for each constituent maximal lineage to form a locally distinct though not strictly demarcated aggregate, and for the segments of these *yizugət* to follow the same rule more markedly. The correlation of residence with lineage, ancestral lands, and the graves of the ancestors holds. At Zubiuŋ, at Ba'ari, and among the non-Namoo clans living in the vicinity of Yaməlag and Sie—the group of clans which the Hill Talis regard as having been culturally influenced by the Namoos—a person is buried among his own (or her husband's) immediate forebears near the homestead. The Hill Talis bury their dead in small cemeteries, each section (*yizug*) or main segment (*dug*) of a section usually
[184 having its own. Among all the Talis and the non-Namoos of the Sie
778] district a sacred grove (*tɔŋgban*) or an External *Bɔɣar* takes the place of the sacred dancing-ground at Tongo as the local and spiritual focus of the settlement. The homestead of the *yizug* head, housing the most important shrines of its ancestors, whatever his ritual office may be, is often fixed, so that when a man succeeds to the office he takes possession also of the homestead that goes with it; thus the idea of the home of the maximal lineage has an everlasting and consecrated embodiment in the actual homestead occupied by its head.

184 Among the clans which have tɛndaanas the local anchorage of the
793 clan and of its constituent maximal lineages is, in some respects, even
621 stronger than among the Namoos. It is more conspicuously wrought into their institutions and more obviously sacrosanct, since the office of tɛndaana presupposes very special ritual bonds, the strongest bonds known to the Tallensi, of a maximal lineage with locality.

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Structure of Peripheral Settlements

In the newer settlements there are no lineages of large span. Where segments of maximal lineages, whose homes are in the old settlements, have been settled for more than a generation, those of their members remaining in the peripheral settlements do not always live in close proximity to one another. People shift readily to take up new land, and spread widely so as to have a large area for cultivation immediately around the homestead, as we have learnt. But the tendency for a lineage to become locally stabilized on the land of its ancestors, near their graves and original home, operates strongly too, and has been strengthened in recent years.

Many men at Woo, Biuŋ, and Datɔk now live on land originally broken for cultivation by their fathers, grandfathers, and even great-grandfathers. A powerful incentive to remain there is the fact that they now hold this land by right of inheritance. An irresistible sanction binding them to these new settlements is the fact that their fathers and grandfathers lie buried there. Born and bred in these settlements, they look upon them as their homes, while maintaining strong ties with their original clan settlements, which they regard as the clan homes.

The effect is to establish new, permanent, local nuclei for minor branches of lineages anchored in the old settlement. Around these nuclei we sometimes find a small cluster of homesteads, the heads of which are all members of a lineage segment of two, three, or at the most four generations. But this is far from common. As we have mentioned before, these settlements have been, and are being, occupied by people of very diverse genealogical origin from all parts of Taleland and neighbouring areas. This is particularly marked in the case of Datɔk. Biuŋ and Woo have been settled chiefly by people from Tongo and the places immediately adjacent to or socially connected with Tongo. In addition to the bonds of local cohesion the inhabitants of these places have also the ties of political and ritual interdependence which they bring with them from their original clan settlements. At Datɔk no such bonds are carried over into the new community. A Gban man may have as his nearest neighbours a man from Ba'ari, a man from Bɔlɔga, a man from Yamɔlɔg, and a man from Bongo. The basis of political unity is locality rather than lineage. The sections of Datɔk, for example, are local units, wards, or quarters, not genealogical-cum-local units.

But it is characteristic of Tale social organization that the bonds of local association never stand alone and are never sufficient in themselves to generate bonds of solidarity. Mere contiguity requires some degree of mutual accommodation. It does not, in a society without a constituted legal system or territorially organized political units, create mutual legal obligations, or provide a basis for corporate relations between individuals. Hence it must be reinforced by, and indeed founded on, more fundamental ties which are morally and jurally binding in their own right. In the older settlements lineage ties have this function; in new settlements kinship ties take their place.

The following excerpt from a census of a part of Datɔk illustrates this.

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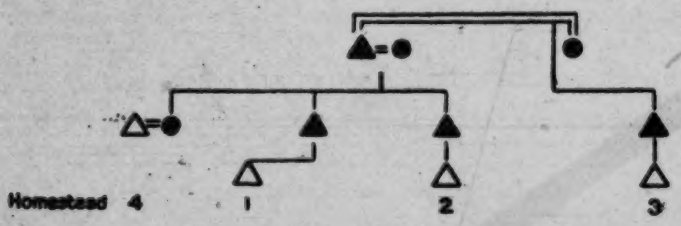
613 It will be seen that both affinal and cognatic kinship ties regulate the
621 collocation of homesteads.
166 *Section: Zalemuuri.* (A local subdivision of Datok, named after the stream forming one of its boundaries.)

Homestead 1. This belongs to Latammi, a man of about 55, whose father, a Gar man, came to build his house and to farm here about fifty years ago. He died and was buried at his new home. Latammi, his eldest son, then inherited the homestead and the surrounding farm-land, and remained living there.

Homestead 2. About 200 yards away, is owned by Latammi's father's younger brother's (*pit soog*) son. This young man formerly shared Latammi's homestead but recently moved out to set up in his own.

Homestead 3. About 250 yards away from 1. Latammi's father's half-brother (*suuz*) built this homestead, having come to settle here shortly after Latammi's father. This man died recently and the homestead and surrounding farm-land now belong to his son.

The following genealogy shows how the heads of these three homesteads are related:



Together they constitute a lineage of small span, a segment of a greater lineage whose home is at Gar. Their residential collocation is exactly the same as it would be if they were living at Gar or in any of the older settlements.

Homestead 4. About 200 yards from 1. This is the homestead of a Ba'ari man who migrated to Datok about three years ago. He is a brother-in-law (sister's husband) (*dakii*) of Latammi's late father (see genealogy above), and was, on this account, given land on which to build and settle by the latter's half-brother's son of Homestead 3.

Homestead 5. About a quarter of a mile from 1. This belongs to Naambon, whose father, a man from Bolaga, came to build and settle here some forty years ago. This man had first migrated from Bolaga to Kosabolag, on the outskirts of Duusi. While he was living there Teroog (now an old man), a member of the same maximal lineage as Latammi's father, who lives in another section of Datok, married one of the Bolaga man's daughters. The land he held at Duusi proved to be unsatisfactory, so Naambon's father decided to move to Datok. Through the good offices
[606] of his son-in-law, Teroog, he was introduced to Latammi's father, who (as a son-in-law (*dasa*) in the classificatory sense) gave him land to settle on near the fringe of the huge area he had marked out as a farm for himself.

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This small sample is typical of the relationships that unite neighbours at Datɔk. The settlement is divided up into such clusters of homesteads, numbering anything from four or five homesteads to about a dozen, which have grown up around the homestead of a man who migrated to settle there forty or fifty years ago when Datɔk was still uninhabited bush.

Gradually the original settlers were joined by younger members of their lineages and kinsmen, migrating for economic or psychological reasons but drawn to this particular place by their kinship ties. Often several such clusters of homesteads close to one another, the owners of which are linked among themselves by ties of lineage or kinship, are grouped round men who are themselves linked by lineage or kinship. They are the original settlers, or more usually the sons or grandsons of the original settlers, who built their homesteads far apart from one another so as to have ample land for cultivation close at hand, and then 'cut' (*ɣma*) parcels of this land for the immigrants who filtered in subsequently.

In these conditions a great deal of intermarriage takes place between neighbours and within the local community, since many different clans are represented in the community. Tallensi are more inclined to marry people who live nearby than to take spouses from a distance; and at Datɔk marriage between the children of men who happen to be neighbours because of their kinship with a third man, but are themselves not related, is very common.[1] This weaves the mesh of kinship ties yet more finely, binding neighbour to neighbour still more closely and firmly.

It is evident that the corporate life of a community like Datɔk—and this applies only in a lesser degree to other peripheral settlements of mixed origins—must differ in many ways from that of the older settlements. Two clans, Gar and Gban, are numerically and politically dominant at Datɔk, just as Zoo is at Biuŋ, and the Hill Talis are at Moɣaduur, and the people of these numerically superior clans or lineages can co-operate and unite for action in the same way as the segments of the clan do in the old settlements. People who have very few or no clansmen or lineage brothers in the settlement are in a different position. In Tale jural and ceremonial relations all matters of importance are dealt with corporately by lineages. Thus, if a Ba'ari man living at Datɔk suffers a bereavement, takes a wife, marries off a daughter, gets involved in a dispute, or has to make an important sacrifice, he has to call upon the elders of his lineage and clan at Ba'ari to support him in the action required. His extra-clan kinsmen at Datɔk cannot give him corporate assistance, though they would be individually helpful. Similarly he takes part in the economic, jural, and ceremonial events in which his Datɔk neighbours and kinsmen are involved only as an individual actuated by ties of personal kinship and concern for the welfare of particular people. In other words, these outlying settlements are still politically inchoate. They are still mainly social and political apanages of the older settlements from which they have been colonized; very many of their members are still tied into the structure of their natal clan-settlements, and are still

[1] I state this in a general way, as I did not take a sufficiently large sample of marriages at Datɔk to give a numerical indication of the extent of marriage within the settlement.

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621 loyal to the interests of these clan settlements. But the political structure
613 of the newer settlements is rapidly crystallizing out, on the basis of a
177 territorial unity reinforced by inter-individual kinship ties. This process has been greatly accelerated under the influence of British rule, with its stress on the territorial definition of political units and the support it gives to chiefs and headmen in the exercise of administrative and judicial functions.

Seniority and Authority in the Lineage

613 In the course of our morphological analysis of the lineage system from
182 within, we have made many references to the corporate activities in which this system emerges. As in our study of clanship, it has been convenient to speak as if the lineage structure exists and persists apart from the activities in which it emerges. But this is only an analytical device which we shall consider more fully presently. The implied distinction between the structure of the lineage and its functions does, however, bring out the important fact that the lineage structure is more than any of its functions. It is the integral of what is common to all Tale institutions in which the patrilineal line operates as an organizing principle. It is the general factor of consistency, coherence, and continuity in the social structure.

613 The concept of social structure essentially implies ordered extension *in time* as well as ordered articulation *at a given time*. This is often overlooked in the study of primitive society. Among the Tallensi the lineage system enables us to see the operation of the time factor in social structure in a very concrete way.[1] We see how the lineage structure at a given time incapsulates[2] all that is structurally relevant of its past phases and at the same time continually thrusts its growing-points forward. The dynamic equilibrium of a lineage is an equilibrium in time.

The key position, whenever a lineage emerges in function—and this applies to lineages of any span and all orders of segmentation—is that of the lineage head (*kpeem*). He is, to revert to an analogy previously used, the keystone of the arch. He does not stand above the lineage; he is part of it. *Kpeem* literally means 'senior': a *kpeem* is a senior, an elder. The head of the lineage is the most senior male of the group. The head of a lineage and his age or generation equals in the lineage are collectively designated 'the elders (*kpem*)'. They are for the most part the heads of the component segments of the lineage.

613 The rule of seniority, as might be expected in so homogeneous and
888 equalitarian a society, plays an important part in all Tale social relations. When a group of boys are out herding cattle the oldest among them are in charge. The women of a household defer to the most senior by generation, age, or marital status among them. In all collective activities of men the places of honour are taken by the most senior men, the *kpem*. Seniority commands deference at all times.

[1] Cf. my paper 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure', *cit. supra*; also Forde, op. cit. and his previous papers cited there; and a brilliant discussion of this point in E. E. Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer*, ch. 3.

[2] I owe this valuable concept to R. G. Collingwood's *Autobiography*.

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613 561 Seniority (*kpɛmɔt*) is defined by four criteria, singly or in combination according to the situation and the group involved. These are age, generation, social maturity, and status. A youth of 18 is always a 'child (*bii*)'; a man of 40 calls himself a 'child' if his father is still alive, but will be counted among the *kpɛm* if he is head of a nuclear lineage. A chief is always a *kpeem* irrespective of his age or generation.

Succession to lineage headship depends on one very important rule.[1] Within the range of recognized generation differences—that is, at the widest the medial lineage—succession goes by generation, not by age. The son begotten by an old man towards the end of his life takes precedence over his much older grandson. Beyond that range succession goes by age. This is summed up in the maxim 'Generation differences do not cross the *dug* (*dɔɣam pu yakɔt dug la*)'. This rule is a source of frequent discord.

613 [561] No doubt because of their equalitarian social system and their segmentary social structure, Tallensi attach exceptional prestige value to the attainment of lineage headship, especially in the higher orders of lineage segmentation. Rival claims to headships of greater than medial lineages are based on varying interpretations of the rule of seniority. Thus Yinyɛla of Tɔŋ-Puhug (see pp. 195–6) claimed seniority by generation over all the other elders of Lɛbhtiis yir and demanded redress for having been cheated, as he said, of succession to the headship of Puhug thirty-five years or so before. The other elders declared that Puhug had 'spread' genealogically (*eŋ yalɔŋa*) so much since the time of Yinyɛla's grandfather that succession by seniority of generation no longer held outside the inner lineage.

In every maximal lineage (or among Mosuor biis, sub-clan) there is a hierarchy of lineage heads corresponding to the hierarchy of segments and the hierarchy of *bɔɣar* shrines. Obviously a particular lineage head may be head of several segments of different orders. Thus Deemzeet (see p. 194) is head of his nuclear lineage, his medial lineage, and of the whole section of Puhug. At the apex stands the head of the maximal lineage or sub-clan whose status practically always carries with it politico-ritual office. This has an important bearing on the working of the lineage system. Every head of a less than maximal lineage stands for his segment, sometimes in opposition to other segments of the lineage. The head of the maximal lineage is raised above the sectional interests of the segments by his politico-ritual office. He is bound by that office to think of himself as representing the whole maximal lineage and its common interests, irrespective of the segment to which he happens to belong. This is symbolized by his having custody of the focal ancestor shrine of the maximal lineage and is sanctioned by the investment of his position with special ritual status. Though only *primus inter pares*, like all lineage heads, he has the added moral and ritual authority of his office, due to his being identified with the founding ancestors.[2]

[648] [1] This rule and its far-reaching implications are fully discussed in the next volume of this study.

[2] This has often misled Administrative officers faced with rival claimants to jurisdiction in certain areas. When a chief or tindaana says of another 'I gave

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613 Tallensi say that lineage headship is conferred by inheritance of, or succession to (the same term, *vaa*, vb. is used for both), firstly, the custody of the founding ancestor's shrine (*bɔŋar*), and secondly the patrimonial property (*faar*), in particular the home farm (*saman*) of the lineage. Within the nuclear lineage, or at most the inner lineage, both conditions apply; beyond that limit lineage headship does not confer title to land, except in a few special cases; it is determined solely by succession to the custody of the *bɔŋar*. The rules of inheritance and succession are backed by the most powerful sanctions of the ancestor cult and supported by the whole fabric of the social system. Within the medial lineage inheritance disputes occur so rarely as to be negligible. This is a reflection of the strong solidarity of this unit, and of the recognition of classificatory fatherhood within it. Beyond that range succession disputes are settled either by the arbitration of the maximal lineage head or by an appeal to the ancestors through divination or an oracle test.

613 577 The range of application of the two conditions of *kpɛmɔt* define the gradation of powers and functions discharged by lineage heads. Within the nuclear (or at most inner) lineage the head has paternal authority[1] associated with his control of the farm-land and of the labour of his dependants. He has corresponding jural and ritual responsibilities for the junior members of the lineage. Formally, his is the decisive voice in all matters in which the lineage emerges as a corporate unit—for example, in the disposal of the daughters in marriage and in the payment of bride-price for sons' wives. Beyond the nuclear lineage the lineage head's powers and authority are purely moral and ritual. He cannot, for instance, command the services of any member of the lineage (outside his nuclear lineage) as of right, nor is he responsible for any of them in such matters as bride-price payments. And the degree to which he commands the loyalty of his lineage co-members depends considerably on his personality. They will always support him unhesitatingly where the common interests of the lineage are concerned, but they might not, in private matters, treat him with the confidence due to his status if he lacks tact or tries to be dictatorial. A lineage head represents the lineage. He is the pivot of its corporate unity. Everything he does as lineage head is for and on behalf of the lineage. Hence he never takes action in corporate affairs without consulting and obtaining the consent of the heads of all the component segments of the lineage. In fact a lineage head very rarely takes action in corporate matters without the presence of all the senior male members of the lineage. Thus it is common for the initiative and drive in corporate activities to come from younger men of intelligence and forceful personality, though they are carried out by, or in the name of, the lineage head. This is especially the case when, as often happens, lineage heads are old and infirm. Tinta'alɔm's senility did not diminish the respect and affection in which he was held by all the people

[613] him land to dwell on and therefore I am his superior' he must not be taken literally. He is referring to a tradition of settlement going back to the founding ancestors of their lineages.

[1] We analyse the function of classificatory fatherhood and of paternal authority in the lineage more fully in the second volume of this study.

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of Tɔŋ-Kuorɔg. The practical duties of his office were carried out by his sons and other elders of the section. The decrepitude of age does not make a chief or tendaana any the less a chief or tendaana. The activities of the office are simply taken over by his sons.

Tallensi never undertake anything of importance,—for instance, a marriage transaction or the building of a new shrine or making a new bush farm—without the knowledge of the other members of the medial lineage and without consulting or at least informing the head of their section or maximal lineage. The home of the lineage head is the centre of the social life of the lineage members and their families. There is a constant coming and going of members of the lineage at the lineage head's homestead. There they often congregate in the dry season to gossip or discuss their affairs under his shade tree. Visiting kinsmen and affines of lineage members from other clans usually call to greet him there. This applies especially to the medial lineage but also to maximal lineages and sections in a slightly lesser degree. The lineage head himself, if he is able-bodied, often goes to see other members of the lineage. The bonds of solidarity, mutual interest, and knowledge of one another's affairs are thus constantly being knit together within the lineage.

Though a lineage head has no judicial authority, he is often asked to arbitrate in disputes or conflicts between segments of the lineage. What he generally tries to do is to bring about a compromise and reconciliation, for he has no powers of enforcing his decision. When he is successful in adjusting differences, it is on account of his prestige and because he has the public opinion of the lineage on his side. No lineage head would attempt to adjust a dispute in the lineage without the advice and backing of the other elders of the lineage.

The sanction of a lineage head's position is the ancestor cult. Even a chief has, in the native social order, no judicial or economic sanctions to support his authority. A tendaana has, in addition, the sanction of the Earth. The role of the lineage head in corporate affairs, his duties, responsibilities, and privileges all arise from the fact that he has custody of the lineage *boyar*. The strength of this sanction depends not only on the natives' belief in the mystical powers of the ancestors but also on the crucial function of the ancestor cult as the ideology around which lineage relations are organized. The cult of the lineage ancestors is the supreme centripetal force in lineage relations. Many men live far away from their lineage homes. They maintain their lineage bonds on account of their dependence on the ancestor cult. Individuals may transgress the norms of lineage unity and amity with apparent impunity. Their death, when it comes, is conceptualized as a punishment from the ancestors and this serves to reaffirm the norms of lineage solidarity.

Because of this, sacrifices to the lineage *boyar* form the key mechanism for maintaining lineage cohesion and affirming the status of the lineage head. The first of these sacrifices made by a new lineage head (in a lineage of a high order) when he formally takes over the custody of the *boyar* is of outstanding significance. Not less than three or four and sometimes ten to fifteen years elapse between successive ceremonies of this sort. They are occasions of special solemnity marking the re-establishment of

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613 the proper structural form of the lineage around a new lineage head after
769 its temporary disturbance by the death of his predecessor. Not only do
182 all the adult members of the lineage attend, each bearing a fowl to be
782 sacrificed on behalf of himself and his segment, but representatives of other branches of the clan and very many extra-clan kin, descendants of daughters of the lineage, also attend. The pattern of the rites is the same as that of any sacrifice to the *boyar*, but all who participate feel them to be a specially binding sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, particularly during the festive episodes of sharing out the meat and the beer.

613 In addition, the funeral of a lineage head is an event that mobilizes
764 the entire lineage structure and demonstrates the power of the religious
182 sanctions as the bulwark of his position. Special rites are performed, in many clans, to detach his social personality from the lineage shrines. And it is often in the divination sessions at the funerals of lineage heads that suppressed intra-lineage conflicts are brought into the open. The religious sanctions against intra-lineage conflict are thus set in motion and reconciliations brought about.

613 A mere catalogue of the chief privileges and responsibilities of the head of lineage of a high order is sufficient to indicate his social role as chief representative of the lineage in relation to other lineages and to the ancestors. No ceremonial or jural transaction in which the lineage is concerned as a whole can take place without the presence of the lineage head or his deputy. When the carcass of an animal slaughtered for ritual or ceremonial purposes is divided up, the best part of the portion allotted to a particular lineage is reserved for the *kpeem*. When a member of the [224] lineage kills an animal in the hunt, one hind leg and sometimes the skin are the perquisites of the lineage head (of the medial or maximal lineage), and the skull and horns are deposited with him. In these and similar situations the *kpeem's* privileges are regarded as a means of apprising the [769] ancestors of the event and winning their blessings. The meat he gets, for instance, is 'set out for the ancestor spirits (*zien kpiim*)' before it is consumed.

613 Certain sacrifices to the lineage ancestors are obligatory on every man
782 of advanced years. They are both a sign of gratitude to the ancestors
769 and a symbol of the common interest of the whole lineage in the giver's welfare and possessions. Thus a man must sacrifice one of the cows he receives for his eldest daughter's bride-price to the lineage *boyar* of his medial lineage; and the lineage head receives a hind leg and the skin as well as other parts of the animal. Similarly if a man wishes to set up a new ancestor shrine he must first inform his lineage ancestors by means of a sacrifice to the *boyar*. Hence Tallensi say that one of the advantages of being the head of a medial or maximal lineage is that there is always meat in the house. But this privilege, they add, is a compensation for the responsibilities of lineage headship. Not the least of these is the *kpeem's* duty to make frequent sacrifices to the ancestors in order to preserve their goodwill towards the lineage.

613 All interlineage jural and ritual transactions take place formally
578 through the lineage heads. Thus if a man seduces the wife of a member
627

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of another medial or maximal lineage of his own or a closely allied clan, hostility between the two units is aroused and their normal relations are thrown out of gear. But usually steps are very quickly taken to set matters right. Either the head of the wronged lineage sends to protest to the head of the seducer's lineage, and the latter, backed by the lineage elders, makes the seducer confess and agree to apologize, or else the culprit himself, aware that public opinion would reprove his action, begs the head of his nuclear lineage to get the head of their medial or maximal lineage to intercede on his behalf with the head of the wronged lineage. It is at the homestead of the latter that the rites of reconciliation are performed by representatives of the two lineages. This is typical of inter-lineage jural relations.

A woman who commits adultery exposes her husband and children to mystical dangers. Among Namooe she is haled to the homestead of the head of her husband's medial lineage and subjected to the ordeal of entering the gateway (*zanɔr*). If she confesses she may enter safely. If not, the lineage ancestors will cause her to get ill if she enters the gateway. This is a very powerful sanction of marital fidelity among women and is one reason why adultery is not very common. Tallensi sum up the role of the lineage head in the sentence, 'All our (lineage) affairs are conducted at the gateway of our lineage head's homestead (i.e. the lineage *zanɔr*—cf. p. 208) (*Ti yɛla kama maana ti kɩeem yir zanɔne*)'.

In the old days the men of a medial lineage all assembled at the *kpeem's* homestead before going out to fight. There they all took part in sacrifices to the ancestors and 'ate (*dī*)' protective medicine to fortify themselves against the enemy's arrows. Nowadays they do the same before setting out on a communal hunting expedition, for there are many dangers to be faced—accidental arrow wounds, fire, and wild beasts. This is the service for which the *kpeem* is rewarded when he is given a hind leg of every animal slain by the sons of the lineage.

The *kpeem's* functions are most conspicuous in relation to the wives and children of the lineage, for they stand for the greatest common interest of the lineages. It is the reproductive powers of the wives and the existence of children that secure the perpetuation of the lineage and the immortality of the ancestors. The handling of a woman who commits adultery illustrates this. Similarly the lineage elders must be informed of, and the lineage head give his formal consent to, the re-marriage of a widow of any member of the lineage. A widow is in theory entitled to reject a husband chosen for her by her late husband's nuclear lineage and to choose any member of his clan of the right generation. If she does this she must get the consent of the head of his medial lineage and this is binding on the whole medial lineage. Her late husband's nuclear lineage cannot then object to her marrying out of that lineage.

The head of a medial or maximal lineage comes into the formalities of marriage for every member, man or woman, of the lineage, in his capacity as its chief representative in interlineage jural relations. The right to dispose of a girl in marriage is vested in her guardian the head of her nuclear lineage. It is he who receives and owns the bride-

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613 582 price;[1] and conversely, it is he who is directly responsible for the payment of bride-price for the wives of members of the nuclear lineage, and for any other outlay entailed by the marriage formalities. But for all these transactions the formal consent (which is in fact never withheld) of the medial lineage head is required. This has the force of a blessing. When 613 583 the bridegroom's people send the placation gifts (*lu sendaan*) by which the marriage is regularized, the messenger goes first to the head of the girl's medial or maximal lineage, and gives him a live cock, the most important item among the placation gifts.[2] By accepting the live cock the lineage head signifies the acquiescence of the whole lineage in the marriage and the blessing of the ancestors thereon. Whether or not bride-price is paid, the girl is thereafter the jurally recognized wife of the bridegroom. As a rule it is perfectly safe for the lineage head to accept the cock, as placation gifts are only sent when the head of the girl's nuclear lineage consents. But cases do occur in which they are sent without the knowledge of the latter as a dodge by which to compel him to acquiesce in the marriage. Then if the head of the medial lineage accepts the live cock, the head of the girl's nuclear lineage must perforce acquiesce. This makes the marriage binding but does not secure it against dissolution through action taken by the head of the girl's nuclear lineage.

In the same way, when a woman's father's people come to demand the payment of bride-price from her husband's nuclear lineage, they go first to the head of the husband's medial lineage. He conducts the messengers to the head of the husband's nuclear lineage and formally presides over the negotiations.

Marriage transactions illustrate a very important principle of Tale jural relations. They are always relations between lineage units. Even when they appear to involve only particular individuals the lineage framework is implicit in the transaction. But this does not mean that all Tale jural relations are based on the concept of collective responsibility. On the contrary, jural responsibility is precisely fixed on particular individuals or exactly defined corporate units. This is graphically summed up in many Tale maxims. Thus they say 'A pipe sounds best in its owner's mouth (*Yiig m-mah ka daana nuoni*)'—that is, an action should be answered for by the person directly responsible for it. What we find, rather, is that all jural relations involve a configuration of rights on one side and a configuration of responsibilities on the other, both corresponding to the range of lineage segments involved. And no jural transaction is complete until the whole configuration of rights and responsibilities, on both sides, is brought into action. Though marriage formalities involve primarily the nuclear lineage and medial lineage, they presuppose the entire framework of maximal lineage and clan relations; and this is the case with most other jural relations among the Tallensi.

[1] Subject to limitations that will be detailed in our next volume.

[602] [2] In many clans there is an arrangement between pairs of medial or maximal lineages that have some special tie of kinship by which the *sendaan* cock for a girl of one lineage is delivered to the *kpeem* of the other lineage and vice versa. E.g. this arrangement obtains between Lebhtiis yidem and Kabuu yidem at Tɔŋ-Puhug and is a sign of their close kinship as lineages sprung from one original progenitrix (see p. 212).

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682 Some sixty years ago a Tamboog man was killed by a group of Yamələg
×618 men with whom he quarrelled at a dance. Two or three years later a couple of Tamboog men met a Yamələg man alone in the bush and slew him in revenge. The Yamələg people understood that this was a case of 'wiping out a debt' and the matter was regarded as closed.

×618 The principle of representative status enhances the sense of lineage or
431 clan solidarity. We have seen how, in ceremonial situations, any member of a lineage or clan is regarded as representing the whole unit. I have often seen men refuse gifts of meat or food at ceremonies because these had no precedent and accepting them would be equivalent to committing their lineage or clan to reciprocate in the same way at some future time.

●613 Co-operation in ceremonies, especially in funerals, brings to light the
764 institutional machinery of lineage and clan solidarity. Its basis is the
×618 distribution of duties and privileges among the different segments of the lineage or clan concerned in the situation, in accordance with their segmentary relationship to the group principally affected. Thus in funerals, in accordance with the maxim 'Brother lineages take charge of one's affairs (*sunzɔp m-maan yɛla*)', members of a close brother lineage of the bereaved lineage supervise the ceremonies. In addition, all the segments of the maximal lineage or clan concerned send prescribed food contributions and receive prescribed shares of beer, meat, and food distributed during the ceremonies. Funerals are important because the death of a person may entail a rearrangement of social relations in a segment and this is a matter of common interest to the whole clan.

×618 These obligatory reciprocal services and privileges constantly remind the individual of his dependence on his clansmen for the proper management of the critical events of his life. In consequence the obligation of reciprocity is strongly felt, in both secular and ritual matters, the strength of the feeling being relative to the lineage relationship of the parties. When a man invites a collective hoeing party (*pɔɔh kpa'arɔp*) it is always co-members of his medial lineage who turn up in largest force. Distant clansmen only come if they have ties of personal matrilateral kinship with him. And the motive usually given for responding to such an invitation is 'To-morrow I may need the help of a hoeing party'. Public opinion is critical of those who do not conform to the conventions of mutual assistance, and when they find themselves compelled to call for assistance in collective hoeing or housebuilding or some similar activity, they are left in the lurch.

578 Intra-clan disputes involving lineages of a higher order than the
×618 nuclear lineage very rarely arise over economic affairs—that is, in effect, over the ownership of land or live-stock. Disputes in higher order lineages arise over the inheritance of widows or marriage with a woman who was formerly the wife of a member of a different segment of the clan. Members of the deceased husband's medial lineage feel they have a prior claim to a widow's hand and sometimes object to her marrying a man of a different branch of the clan. And if a marriage is dissolved, no matter what the reason may be, it is regarded as a grave breach of clan solidarity for any other member of the husband's clan to take her to wife. It arouses suspicion of collusion between the woman and the second

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his quarrel with the chief of his clan. The diviner added that the ancestors demanded that Gbalɔg should be exhumed and re-buried at Tongo among his forefathers. This meant that Gbalɔg's sons should beg the Chief of Tongo's pardon and offer expiatory sacrifices to the clan ancestors. But Gbalɔg's second son, who had lived with him, scornfully refused to do this, and added the further sin of withholding from his older brother Naŋgbeog, the legitimate heir, the property their father had left. There was scathing criticism of his behaviour at Tongo but nothing could be done about it. There are no jural sanctions compelling a man to abide by custom in cases of this kind; and as the Tallensi often say, men do not fear to defy even the ancestor spirits, when their property or power is at stake.

But shortly afterwards the second son suddenly became ill and died. At once everybody drew the obvious moral: he had incurred the wrath of the ancestors for his double sin. And when the cause of his death was sought by divination public opinion was confirmed. Naŋgbeog, now the recognized heir, at once got some elders to plead with the chief on his behalf and the curse was withdrawn. Naŋgbeog gave a young bull and several small stock to be sacrificed to the clan ancestors in expiation of his father's sin. Since representatives of all branches of the clan have to be present at such sacrifices, this was equivalent to a ritual reconciliation. Naŋgbeog then exhumed and re-buried the bodies of his father and brother at Tongo. He brought home the live-stock and personal effects he had inherited from his father as well as the widows and children of whom he was now the proper guardian. Gbalɔg's defection was thus erased and his line wholly reunited to the parent stem.

Lineage solidarity, which in its widest extent passes over into clan solidarity, has great practical utility for the natives. But this is not the source of its strength and binding force. Their roots lie in the moral premisses of Tale society; the ideas of right and duty, in the idiom of Tale culture, are the formative elements in the sentiment and the display of lineage solidarity. The starting-point is the fundamental moral axiom of Tale social organization, the axiom that kinship is binding in its own right.[1] And the supreme sanction of lineage solidarity is, as we have seen, the ancestor cult, which is, for the natives, the objective, cultural embodiment of the social conscience.

This is evident not only from the preceding analysis but from a consideration of the rights and restrictions associated with lineage membership. There is the whole complex of rights, obligations, and prohibitions centred in the wives of the lineage members. Underlying it is the identification of lineage members with one another in virtue of their common agnatic descent. The right to inherit a clansman's wife is the correlative of the prohibition against adultery with a clansman's wife. Both rules spring from the notion of the social equivalence of siblings and from the common interest of the clan in the children of the clan. These are not matters of collective property rights but of moral norms. This is clear from the sanction against adultery with a clansman's wife, the belief that the adulterer is mystically dangerous to the injured husband if the latter gets ill.

[1] This subject is fully discussed in *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi.*

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683 Similarly there is the prohibition against homicide within the clan. It is a moral prohibition, a taboo (*kihər*), the overt sanction being that the slayer's segment and the victim's segment cannot again sacrifice together. This is shown equally by the fact that vengeance is prohibited, in accordance with the maxim 'It is (as if) a cow had trampled its calf to death (*naah n-nɔ bu bii ku*)', and will be prevented by the elders if necessary by forcibly restraining the victim's segment brothers. Hence comes the prohibition, also, against raiding (*ŋɔk*) within the clan or between linked clans.

578 613 To sum up, there is an undercurrent of tension in every clan and lineage arising directly out of its segmentary structure. From time to time this breaks out in conflict. But in the long run lineage solidarity prevails. The pattern is the same as in the total socio-geographic region of Tale society.

Modern Factors of Disequilibrium

A. *British Rule*

578 182 The suppression of warfare is a symptom of the changed political circumstances of the Tallensi. New forces are beginning to affect their social structure, creating new internal tensions that threaten the supremacy of the ancient sanctions of cohesion. Though the traditional politico-ritual institutions are still the most powerful determinants of corporate relations within and between clans and maximal lineages, the tendency of the new forces is to work against the traditional social equilibrium. As we have seen, the natives themselves stress this.

177 175 578 622 The most pervasive and most powerful of these new factors is British rule. Its greatest achievement has been the enforcement of peace and the substitution of an embryonic judicial organization for the arbitrament of the bow and arrow. Up till 1933, when the reorganization of the system of local government in the Northern Territories was inaugurated, the Administration aimed at creating a centralized, pyramidal organization of executive authority among the clan heads of the Tallensi, under the leadership of the Chief of Tongo. To further this aim the Administration gave its support to certain headmen and chiefs in their dealings with their own clans and with one another. These men were vested with powers which they had never previously held and which had no relation to the native social structure. Coercion and extortion were practised, under cover of meeting the requirements of the white man. Where these requirements were concerned, the system worked, though far from satisfactorily. But constant friction between the chiefs and headmen constituting this artificial hierarchy was inevitable owing to the contradiction between it and the segmentary pattern of the native social structure. For, as we have seen, the native social structure, like the traditional economy and the age-old ritual ideas and values of the people, has preserved its vitality in relation to the social interests and ends which it has always served and still subserves.

177 578 622 Whenever these interests and ends are paramount, as at the times of the Great Festivals, the factional rivalries stirred up by the new dis-

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578 neighbours, and friends of the deceased. They feel the contradiction
764 between their mutual bonds of amity with one another as kin or friends and their latent hostility, in other situations, as members of opposed corporate units. Thus it often happens that when a diviner is publicly consulted
[787] about the mystical cause of the death, he attributes it to the anger of the ancestors or the Earth over the disharmony on the hills. Even if this is not the diviner's verdict, the faction opposing that to which the dead man belonged will interpret his death in this sense. Thus when the Sakpee tɛndaana died, the men of Kpata'ar, including some of his own matrilateral kinsmen, were secretly almost jubilant. They were convinced that this death was a punishment, and a warning from the ancestors, for his defection from the Kpata'ar party to the Gɔlibdaana's side; for the Sakpee tɛndaana is one of the ritual officers of the External *Bɔyar* of which Kpata'ardɛm are the senior custodians, as we have previously seen.

613 Up to now these mystical warnings have not been heeded. They have,
578 at most, reinforced the tendency for the heads of maximal lineages to
787 aline themselves on the same side as the maximal lineages with which they have ties of clanship and of ritual collaboration. For obviously these ties have greatest efficacy for the individuals who hold the offices through which they are normally expressed. The rank-and-file members of the lineages concerned often persist in the path of greatest self-interest. Nor have these warnings helped to mitigate the struggle between the Gɔlibdaana's maximal lineage and the other lineages which take the lead in opposing him. To-day, as in the days of warfare, a man can keep up cordial personal relations with a kinsman in the opposite camp. He will not, because of his personal kinship ties with the enemy, contract out of his own lineage in issues affecting its corporate unity—least of all when the motive of profit is added to the bonds of lineage solidarity.

622 The disturbing effects of the Gɔlibdaana's pecuniary enterprise have
578 not been limited to Tɛnzugu. He has come into conflict with Yinduuri by
621 claiming jurisdiction over a section of Zandoya that has always been regarded as coming within the field of social and politico-ritual relations of Yinduuri (see p. 163). He is not on speaking terms with the Bɔyaraana of Sii, who claims to be the senior ritual functionary of the Wannii *Bɔyar* as well as the senior chief of all the Talis, and therefore demands control of the pilgrim traffic with the south. He has gravely offended the Chief of Tongo, his own brother-in-law, by wrongfully assuming the insignia and aping the etiquette of a superior chief, and by bribing the Paramount Chief of the Mamprusi to invest him with the rank of a chief of high
[177] status. But for the intervention of the Administration this particular quarrel would already have led to serious disturbances, for the people of Tongo are extremely jealous of the rank and status of their chiefship and unanimously resent the Gɔlibdaana's presumption. It is notable that they do not in the least envy the Gɔlibdaana his pecuniary monopoly. Frankly despising the fertility and oracle aspects of the *Bɔyar* cult as a piece of fraudulent magic, they look on the money gained through the pilgrim traffic as tainted. In this matter Namoos and Talis have not
[477] got a sphere of common interests within which they might be rivals. The interests of Tongo and Bunkiuk intersect only in relation to the

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POSTSCRIPT

THIS book has dealt with the constitution and interrelations of the corporate groupings found in Tale society. But this is only one major aspect of Tale social structure. There is another major aspect of no less importance, the system of interpersonal social bonds that constitutes the Kinship System in the strict sense. The lineage and clan organization forms the permanent framework of social relations in Taleland. But it is based on certain fundamental categories of thought and axioms of conduct that derive from a different cross-section of Tale social life, the domestic organization. The well-worn simile of the warp and the woof is apposite here. We can think of the lineage and clan organization as the warp of the social fabric of the Tallensi. Interwoven with it, sustaining it, and in turn shaped and regulated by it, is the intricate web of interpersonal relations we have described as the Kinship System in the strict sense. Kinship ties grow directly out of the biological, psychological, and social relations of men, women, and children in the domestic nucleus of Tale social life, the agnatic joint family. Unlike lineage ties, they involve the equal and parallel recognition of descent through both parents; and because of this bilateral criterion of social identification in kinship relations, they cut across the lineage structure.[1]

This second major aspect of Tale social structure, the Kinship System, is the subject of our next volume, *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi*. Our aim will be not a detailed analysis of all Tale interpersonal relationships through all the levels of social behaviour, but an investigation of their place in the social structure in relation to the lineage and clan organization.

[1] Cf. my previously cited paper on 'The Significance of Descent in Tale Social Structure'.

[p. 259]

[p. 260 is blank]

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105 the ultimate sanction of its politico-ritual status in Tale society. The Talis and other clans that have the tendaana-ship claim to be the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, and the ritual sanctions of their office are derived from the Earth cult.

The Maximal Lineage and Clanship Ties

613 All politico-ritual offices are vested in particular maximal lineages or clans. These are the basic units of Tale social organization that emerge in corporate activities. They are defined primarily by the canon of agnatic descent. A maximal lineage is the most extensive group of people of both sexes all of whom are related to one another by common patrilineal descent traced from one known (or accepted) founding ancestor through known agnatic antecedents. The exact agnatic relationship of every member of a maximal lineage to every other member is, in theory, known or can be ascertained by genealogical reckoning. All the agnatic descendants of the founding ancestor, both male and female, belong to the maximal lineage. But in practice the male members are supreme in the conduct of lineage affairs and the *de facto* corporate unit is the group of male members. This is due in part to the fact that women members are bound to marry out of the lineage, by the rule of lineage exogamy. As marriage is patrilocal, a woman is usually separated from her male lineage-kinsfolk, and cannot easily take part in regular lineage counsels. What is more important, her children do not belong to her patrilineal lineage and they do not therefore contribute to its physical and social perpetuation. This is one manifestation of the dominance of males and the male line in jural and ritual institutions which, as we shall see in the following pages, is the principal factor governing the inter-personal as well as the corporate relations of individuals.

618 The maximal lineage is the basis of the Tale clan. A clan (or subclan, in a few instances) is a localized unit consisting of a defined segment of a maximal lineage, or a whole maximal lineage; or of two or more linked maximal lineages, augmented, frequently, by one or more accessory lineages incorporated into the clan by a fiction of kinship through a woman of the authentic male line. The commonest type is the composite clan, consisting of two or more linked maximal lineages of independent patrilineal descent whose association is accounted for by a myth of remote kinship or of age-old local solidarity. Every maximal lineage is exogamous, and with very few exceptions this rule applies also to the associations of maximal lineages we have called clans. Apart from local unity and putative genealogical linkage, clans are internally unified by common ritual cults connected with the worship of the ancestors and the earth.

587 An important corollary to the rule of exogamy in the maximal lineage and clan is the right of a man to inherit the widow of any male member

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A maximal lineage is not only an organic genealogical unit, it is also *ipso facto* an organic ritual unit. The focus of its genealogical differentiation from and relative autonomy in relation to other like units, as well as of its corporate solidarity and its continuity in time, is the cult of its founding ancestor. The material symbol of this is the shrine (*bɔyar*) of that ancestor, custody of which is vested in the head (i.e. the most senior male) of the lineage. Among the Talis each segment of a composite clan has its lineage *bɔyar*, distinguishing it from the other segments of the clan. But, in addition, groups of maximal lineages belonging, severally, to *different* clans, and not necessarily united *inter se* by ties of clanship, collaborate in the cult of their collective ancestors. The collective ancestors are believed to dwell in a *bɔyar* known as an External *Bɔyar*. An External *Bɔyar* is usually a sacred grove, or a shallow cave in the hill-side, where the community meets for the ritual of the cult. The most important rites of the cult occur during the Harvest Festival, when thanksgiving sacrifices are offered and young men of the group are initiated into its mysteries by special ceremonies.

Clanship ties, as we have mentioned, constitute the principal factor of social integration among all the Tallensi. Among the Talis the cult of the External *Bɔyar* is another important factor of cohesion and equilibrium. It unites segments of different clans in the worship of the ancestors, and is common to the majority of Talis clans. It represents a system of social bonds that cut across and counterpoise those of clanship. But this system is itself counterpoised, on the plane of religious values, by the organization of the Earth cult. Groups of maximal lineages belonging severally to *different* clans, which are not associated in the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, collaborate in the rites of the Earth cult. Each such group has its special Earth shrines, generally in the form of sacred groves (*tɔŋgban*). Thus each maximal lineage of a composite clan among the Talis has one field of corporate social relations in terms of clanship ties, a different field of corporate social relations in terms of the External *Bɔyar* cult, and yet a third field of corporate social relations in terms of the Earth cult. The system as a whole forms a remarkable structure of mutually balancing fields of social and politico-ritual relations integrated into a complex unity. Sectional loyalties in one direction or on one level are counterpoised by similar loyalties in another direction or at another level. And the system as a whole stands under the governance of the supreme sanctions of Tale social life, the ancestor cult and the Earth cult. To crown it all, moreover, there is the ritually sanctioned and regulated polar opposition of Talis and Namoos focused in the relationship of the chiefship and the tɔndaana-ship.

The Internal Constitution of the Maximal Lineage

In this scheme of clanship ties and politico-ritual relationships the

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maximal lineage emerges as a corporate unit irrespective of its internal constitution. The main characteristics of the latter can now be briefly summarized.

A *maximal lineage* is divided into a number of segments all of the same form as the whole lineage but of regularly diminishing order of segmentation. Each segment is identified by reference to its founding ancestor. He marks the point on the genealogical tree of the whole maximal lineage at which that segment's line of descent connects with the other lines of descent sprung from the founding ancestor of the maximal lineage. Thus every maximal lineage is divisible, in the first instance, into two or more Major Segments. This is the highest order of segmentation. Each Major Segment embraces (or is believed to embrace) all the agnatic descendants of one of the sons of the founder of the maximal lineage. At the next level each Major Segment is itself divisible into Major Segments, each embracing the agnatic descendants of one putative son of a son of the founding ancestor of the maximal lineage; and this formula holds at every generation level of the maximal lineage structure (see Fig. 1). The lowest order of segmentation, at the opposite end of the lineage scale to that represented by the maximal lineage, is that of the *minimal lineage* or *minimal segment*, which we define as the group comprising only the children of one man. This is the narrowest agnatic group to which a person can belong.

It is clear from the above that every person belongs to a hierarchy of lineage segments lying between the minimal and the maximal limits of his maximal lineage. Different orders of segmentation become relevant for his conduct in different degrees and in accordance with variations in the social situation. As a farmer, for instance, his productive activities are mainly determined by his membership of his minimal lineage. If he wishes to marry, membership of his maximal lineage is one of the factors limiting his choice of a bride; but the completion of the jural formalities is governed by his membership of a segment of intermediate order. At the same time a very important aspect of the lineage organization is the fact that even when only a segment of a lineage emerges in any corporate activity its status and functions are influenced by the total lineage field including, at the limit, the field of clanship. A lineage segment emerges in action only as a relatively autonomous unit. Its activity is regulated by its relationship to other like segments of the lineage and to the whole. Conversely, a lineage or lineage segment always functions as a combination of segments, not as a collection of individuals of common descent. Every lineage or lineage segment, in fact, represents a dynamic equilibrium of mutually balancing segments.

To the contemporary observer a maximal lineage is fixed in form and dimensions, and all its segments except the minimal segments are fixed in relation to one another. Only the complete extinction of a segment can alter the balance. But the degree of relative autonomy which the segments

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FIG. 1. (Reproduced from *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 34.)

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of a particular order have in ritual, jural, and economic affairs gradually alters with each generation. Thus, while their father is alive, two or more brothers have no jural or ritual or economic autonomy, either severally or as a group. The minimal segment of which they are the nucleus is submerged in the more inclusive lineage segment of which their father is the head. If their grandfather is still alive they and their father come under his jurisdiction and have no autonomy as a lineage segment independently of the segment of higher order of which the grandfather is the head. Thus the *effective minimal lineage*, as we have labelled it in order to simplify our analysis (that is, the narrowest lineage segment which is recognized in corporate activities), is not the same as the morphological minimal lineage. It may include two or three generations of agnates.[1] But the group that constitutes an effective minimal lineage in one generation may, in the next generation, split into two or more effective minimal segments.

In the same way, to simplify our exposition, we have distinguished three other grades of segmentation in the maximal lineage,[2] the *nuclear* lineage or segment, the *inner* lineage or segment, and the *medial* lineage or segment. These grades of segmentation vary in dimensions from one maximal lineage to another and from one generation to the next in the same maximal lineage. They cannot be precisely defined by morphological criteria, for they are distinguishable only in functional terms, by the incidence of jural, ritual, and economic rights, duties, and privileges.

The effective minimal lineage is marked by the fact that it commonly forms the basis of a domestic family which usually constitutes a single unit of food production and consumption.

The nuclear lineage generally forms the basis of what we shall later designate the expanded family. Its male members have a common interest in, and joint rights of inheritance to particular patrimonial farm-lands; and the head of the lineage bears the formal jural responsibility for any of the members in such matters as the payment of bride-price. The founding ancestors of such a lineage may be placed from four to six generations back, reckoning from contemporary minimal lineages. A nuclear lineage may include two or more effective minimal lineages.

The inner lineage, which may include two or more nuclear lineages, may, but does not necessarily, have a common interest in patrimonial land. Like the nuclear lineage, it is not the basis of a unit of production or consumption. Its characteristic feature is that it is the widest lineage within which generation differences are socially recognized. From this it follows that incest with a woman member of the same inner lineage is strongly reprobated and sexual intercourse with the wife of any other

[1] Very rarely four generations; never, to my knowledge, more.
[2] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xii.

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member of the lineage is regarded as a grave sin. The head of the inner lineage still bears jural and ritual responsibility for all junior members of the lineage but to a lesser extent than the head of the nuclear lineage. The founding ancestor of an inner lineage may be placed five to seven generations back.

A medial lineage includes two or more inner lineages. It may be a major segment of a maximal lineage or a major segment of a major segment. Its founding ancestor may be placed from six to eight or nine generations back. Its segments do not, as a rule, have a common interest in patrimonial land. The seduction of a co-member's wife is not invariably considered to be a sin. If it is a lineage of wide span, embracing several sub-segments, and the parties are distant agnates, this might be treated simply as a jural offence.

Generation differences are usually no longer recognized for jural purposes at this range of patrilineal connexion, and the lineage head has no jural responsibility for or ritual obligations on behalf of individual members who are not of his nuclear or, at most, inner lineage. A significant index of the medial lineage is that it marks the limits within which a man is prohibited from marrying a patrilineal kinswoman of his mother. He cannot, as a rule, marry a woman of his mother's maximal lineage who belongs to her medial lineage; he is almost always allowed to marry one who falls outside this range of agnatic kinship with his mother.

It must be emphasized that these distinctions are not made by the natives. The lineage units thus identified are often fairly clearly defined in practice in certain maximal lineages at a given time. But what holds for one maximal lineage does not hold for another of the same clan or for the same maximal lineage at another time. And borderline cases are common, so that a lineage which functions as an inner lineage in one situation may be treated as a medial lineage in another. These distinctions are based on the gradation of rights and duties observed in Tale jural and ritual relations in which lineage segments emerge as corporate units. Hence in considering the incidence of jural or ritual rights and duties, or in determining the scope of kinship sentiments, we cannot always lay down exact limits within which they apply, in accordance with this set of labels. In function as in form the different grades of lineage segments tend to merge into one another; and distinctions that hold at one period will not do so a generation later. As a lineage ramifies, the relative autonomy of its componemt segments tends to increase in proportion; so that a segment that functioned as a nuclear lineage at one time may, twenty or thirty years latter, exhibit all the characteristics of an inner lineage, in corporate activities.

Finally, it should be noted that the Tallensi have no term for the lineage. A lineage of any order is designated the 'house' (*yir*) or the children (*biis*) of the founding ancestor, as in most West African societies

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which utilize the lineage principle in social organization. In contexts where the emphasis is on the lineage considered as a segment of a more inclusive lineage, it is commonly described as a 'room' (*dug*) of the more inclusive 'house' (*yir*). But when Tallensi speak of a *dug* without further specification they generally mean a segment of the order of an inner or medial lineage.

As this nomenclature shows, the internal constitution of the lineage is modelled on that of the polygynous joint family. The standard pattern is that the segments of a lineage trace their descent from the sons by different wives of their common founding ancestor. We shall consider this subject more fully in this book. In consequence, co-ordinate segments of a lineage are referred to as 'brother' (*sunzɔ*) lineages, and their reciprocal rights and obligations, as well as the conventional patterns of sentiments holding between them, are modelled on the mutual relations of brothers.

At the end of our previous book we pointed out that our study of the structure of corporate groups and their interrelations in Tale society covered only one aspect of the total social structure. We spoke of the first part of this study as an analysis of the warp of the social fabric. Our task now is to examine what might be called the woof of the social fabric. Our starting-point, this time, is not the organized corporate group or the framework of continuity and stability in the social structure, but the individual. Our main interest will be in the standard forms and processes of person-to-person relationships and their connexion with the large-scale framework of the society. Our subject, in other words, is Tale kinship in the narrow sense, viewed in relation to the lineage system.

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CHAPTER II

KINSHIP AND THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

The Connexion between Kinship and the Lineage System

THE method of analysis we have followed in this study has required, for purposes of description, the isolation of the lineage system from the domestic organization of the Tallensi. In the actual life of the natives, however, these two planes of social structure do not emerge in isolation from each other. Like blood and tissue in the animal organism, they constitute interpenetrating media of Tale social life. Membership of a family and membership of a lineage are equally and often concurrently decisive for the conduct of the individual and for the course of his life. Yet the analytical separation of these two planes of social structure is not entirely artificial. It corresponds to the fact that the interests and ends (primarily political, jural, and ritual) subserved by the lineage system differ significantly from those (primarily economic and reproductive) subserved by the family system, both in their bearing on individual conduct and in the values attached to them by the society.

The lineage system is the structural basis of Tale political, jural, and ritual institutions, whereas the domestic organization is the structural basis of person-to-person relations in the sphere of kinship in the narrow sense. One of our main tasks in the present investigation will be to observe how these two categories of interests and ends, and the institutions and practices in which they emerge, are co-ordinated and integrated. For the individual's rights and duties, sentiments and values, manners and moral conduct, his thinking, feeling, and acting, in the context of lineage relationships, on the one hand, and in the context of family relationships on the other, are organically integrated, as are lineage and family in the social structure. This appears most clearly, we shall see, from the way in which segmentation in the domestic family parallels segmentation in the lineage, the two processes being not only simultaneous in time but complementary in function. Fission in the lineage[1] follows the pattern of cellular segmentation in the joint family; and fission in the joint family, as we shall see, follows the lines of cleavage in the effective minimal lineage. The local and the functional groupings of families are regulated by the agnatic distance of the family heads from one another. In the study of Tale kinship usages and values we are confronted, at every step, by the interaction of domestic organization and lineage structure.

The Tallensi apply the concepts of kinship to describe and define domestic relations and the person-to-person ties that are derived from them. They use the same concepts in dealing with lineage relations. In

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.

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child, and finally returns to settle down with her first husband. The second husband (or his heir) then has the right, at any time during its life, to redeem his begotten child by paying over to the woman's father a proportion of the bride-price equal to one cow. Whether he has or has not completed the formalities of marriage is immaterial. His right rests upon the fact of his acknowledged paternity. Tallensi attach so much importance to having children that they generally make every effort to assert this right. But often enough, through poverty, parsimony, or mere indifference, the child may be left to grow up under the care of its stepfather. There is no difficulty in the case of a girl. When she marries, her stepfather receives one cow out of her bride-price, the cow of rearing (*ughug naah*), in recompense for the effort and expense of rearing her; her true father, or his heir, receives the remaining three head of cattle, one of which he hands over to his erstwhile father-in-law (or his heir) as the redemption payment for his daughter; and the girl's children regard her physical father's lineage, now formally established as her jural father's lineage, as their mother's paternal lineage.

The case of a boy is, again, more complicated. He may be accepted as his stepfather's own child, as if he were an adulterine child. In theory he cannot be excluded from any filial rights in this man's house. In practice his position is anomalous, both in his own estimation and in the eyes of his stepbrothers. The feeling exists that he is a member of his stepfather's clan on sufferance; sometimes a crisis develops when he tries to assert his rights of inheritance. In any case, Tallensi declare, when a boy in this position grows to manhood he usually endeavours, sooner or later, to return to his true paternal home (*kul u ba yiri*). I came across two or three instances of men who grew up with a stepfather and eventually returned to their true agnatic clan. One of them was quite an old man when he did so.

A man has an unconditional right to do this and must be accepted into his father's lineage and clan. He can assert his filial status without any reservations both in religious and in secular matters. To attempt to exclude him would be contrary to the Tale view that any addition to the numbers of a settlement is valuable in itself. What is more important, it would be a violation of the fundamental norms of kinship and therefore an offence against the ancestors, specifically against the new-comer's father and forefathers. Tallensi say that in fact no one would dream of rejecting a son who comes home in this way. The old man I have referred to not only superseded a 'brother' in the inheritance of his father's estate, but was elected tendaana over the heads of men who had dwelt in their natal settlement all their lives. The new-comer's jural status must, however, be regularized in the normal way. Either his father or his father's heir, or, if for some reason he is unable to do so, the man himself, must pay over to his mother's father's heirs the cow of redemption.

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gift. Accepting the gift, the old man calls on his ancestors to bless his son-in-law and to forgive the offence. The beer is drunk by the elders of the father-in-law's clan segment. This ceremony should be performed before the child is old enough to visit its maternal grandparents. For if the child visits its mother's father's house before the pollution is erased and sets eyes—as inevitably it must—on the midden heap, where its placenta is buried, it will die. Instances are known of men who, defying convention and the ancestor spirits, have taken daughters from their husbands, owing to non-payment of bride-price, just before they were due to bear. Decent folk regard such behaviour as little short of monstrous, for it places mother and child in great danger, bereft as they are of the care and spiritual guardianship of the child's paternal kin and ancestors. It is for this reason, Tallensi say, that it is a taboo to demand a girl's bride-price while she is pregnant. Many a man wins a respite from his father-in-law's importunity on account of his wife's pregnancy.

The Significance of Maternal Parentage and the Uterine Line

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The Tallensi, as we have seen, insist on the equal importance of both parents in the procreation of a child. Though patrilineal descent is overwhelmingly dominant in the jural, economic, and ritual constitution of Tale society, it would be surprising if maternal origin had no institutional function in Tale social organization and ideology. In fact, as has been shown in our analysis of the lineage system,[1] the two principles of patrilineal descent and maternal origin always work together. The two ideas are inseparable in native thought and run like a cry and its echo through the whole social structure. Whenever I have discussed these matters with informants they have generally begun by enumerating all the things that make 'paternal parentage (*ba dɔɣam*)' the most important fact of one's life, and have usually concluded by pointing out that, of course, 'maternal parentage (*ma dɔɣam*)' is also of the greatest importance, though in a different way.

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One indication of the sociological significance of maternal origin is the quality of the bond between mother's brother (*ahɔb*) and sister's son (*ahɔŋ*), either of the first degree or in a classificatory sense.[2] A person's own maternal uncle and maternal grandfather (*yaab*), and their inner lineage (*dug*), impinge directly and frequently on his life. The maternal uncle's home is a person's second home. He has a quasi-filial status there; and in addition to close bonds of sentiment with his uncle and his uncle's close kin, he has specific ceremonial rights and duties in relation to them. Though he has no property, succession, or inheritance rights in his uncle's home, a man has special material privileges there, which give expression to the notion of his quasi-filial status. They show that he is equated with a son in sentiment while

[1] See *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii.
[2] Cf. ch. xi, below.

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strictly differentiated from a son in jural terms. The kinship tie between sister's son and mother's brother is an important breach in the genealogical fence enclosing the agnatic lineage; it is one of the main gateways of an individual's social relations with members of other clans than his own.

But the recognition accorded to the mother's agnatic kin does not bring out the deeper implications of maternal origin as the complementary of paternal origin. These implications are contained in the concept *soog* (pl. *saarət* or *soorət*). This concept involves the idea of matrilineal descent in contrast to that of patrilineal descent. Both in its range of efficacy, its mode of operation, its jural and ritual value, and its emotional and sentimental connotation, matrilineal descent stands in contrast to patriliny.

For obvious physiological reasons the bond of consanguinity with one's mother is unique and unalterable; and it is a peculiarly personal bond. The fact that one's jural status is not derived from one's mother serves to emphasize the personal nature of this bond. A person's mother may desert his father and leave him to be reared (*ugh*) by another woman; he may feel some resentment over this all his life; but she remains his true mother, 'the mother who bore him (*ma dɔɣarug*)'. Nothing can alter this fact or extinguish the kinship ties that arise from it.

We postpone for a later chapter a consideration of the emotional ties of mother and child. The concept *soog* has definite emotional implications; but here we are concerned with its implications for the social structure. *Soog* means a bond of consanguinity which excludes completely any reckoning with lineage affiliation. People who are *saarət* define themselves biologically as 'the offspring of one womb'—or, in the actual phraseology of the natives, 'to have come from one vagina (*yi pɛn yɛni*)'. This is the common way of stating it; occasionally, but far less commonly, one hears people defining themselves as patrilineally related by the corresponding phrase 'to be the children of one penis (*woor yɛni biis*)'.

Saarət, therefore, are uterine kin. Between mother and child there is a uterine bond corresponding to the agnatic bond between father and child; and children of one woman are *saarət*, irrespective of their paternity. A woman may have children by different men of the same clan or of different clans; they are *saarət*, irrespective of their clan affiliations.

Soog is more than the bond of personal kinship between mother and child, and between siblings by the same mother. It is the bond of uterine descent perpetuated through the female line in the same way as the bond of agnatic descent is transmitted through the male line. Uterine siblings are *saarət*; uterine sisters' children are *saarət* (but not uterine brothers' children, for the children of men are not their father's *saarət*); uterine female cousins' children are *saarət*; and so on,

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The idea of witchcraft is not
easily reconcilable with the structure of Tale society, dominated as it is by the patrilineal principle. As we know,[1] the residential unit is based on the agnatic lineage and the local community as a whole is based on lineage grouping. Most corporate and co-operative activities depend on lineage ties. The notion of maleficent secret malice involved in the idea of witchcraft is incompatible with the structure of the localized lineage. The occurrence of witchcraft within a lineage would poison the mutual confidence of agnates, disrupt their corporate relationships, and so throw social life into confusion. As it is, the pegging of witchcraft to the uterine line serves to circumvent any danger it might be to the community. An accusation of witchcraft does not implicate the lineage. It is an individual matter, and other individuals on whom it might be expected to throw suspicion are scattered through various lineages and clans. They may protest, but they have no means of taking organized action in defence of their reputation. In any case, an accusation of witchcraft has a very limited range of reaction. Other lineages and families than those injured by the alleged witch do not feel the injury, and even if they harbour uterine kin of the accused person, self-interest prompts them to disregard the implications of the accusation. The folk-lore of witchcraft provides loopholes for such adaptations of logic to social realities. Some say, for example, that a person only becomes a bad witch if his or her mother gives him or her 'witch's medicine' to eat in infancy.

The hereditary transmission of the capacity of being a witch is not connected with the blood (*ziem*), according to Tale physiological ideas. Both parents transmit their blood to their offspring, as can be seen from the fact that children may resemble either parent in looks. It is solely a matter of the eye (*nif*, pl. *nini*)—not the physical eye but the inner, clairvoyant eye of the witch.

Uterine Kinship and the Notion of Tyuk

The social definition of uterine descent in terms of the notion of witchcraft is consistent with its functions in the structure of Tale society. The meaning of *soog* to the native is neatly symbolized in this notion. And this is true, also, of the only other attribute of social personality that is held to follow the uterine connexion. This is summed up in the concept of *tyuk*.

A person through whose words or actions fighting that leads to the slaying of a man or men is instigated bears a particular kind of mystical responsibility. The slaying of a man gives rise to a chain of mystical blood-guilt, and the person who bears the guilt of instigation may have been an unwitting agent and unaware of his guilt. Supposing, for example, I summon a man from another settlement to come and see me about something, and on his way home he meets a man to whom he owes a debt. Supposing the two men have an argument which ends in

[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. x.

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kinship ties with the mother's brother and his lineage, are all evidence of the imperishability of a woman's ties with her parental family.

Last but not least, a woman continues all her life to be under the care of her patrilineal ancestors. She must observe their totemic taboos. One of them is her spirit guardian (*sɛyər*), to whom her husband will have to send animals on her behalf as sacrifices on critical occasions such as her first confinement, and from whose tutelage she must be ritually released on death. Whenever an important sacrifice to these ancestors takes place in her paternal home she is told, and has the right to participate and to receive a definite share of the sacrificial meat. She has duties to these lineage ancestors too. Thus whenever a shrine of a lineage founder passes to a new lineage head, a daughter of the lineage is selected by divination to fetch it to its new home. Her good or ill fortune as wife and mother depends very much on that occult arbiter of life which the Tallensi conceive of as a personal Predestined Fate (*Nuor Yin*); and this is associated with one's patrilineal ancestors. If a woman's children die one after another she is being dogged by an evil Predestiny; and only her paternal kin can perform the ritual of exorcising it. Finally, when she dies, though she is buried by her husband's lineage according to their rites, and her spirit is aggregated to those of their ancestors, since it is her sons who will sacrifice to and worship her spirit, her paternal kin also perform a short and symbolic funeral ceremony for her. Thus she is 'brought home (*mar kul*)' to be received amongst her paternal ancestors, and the cycle of her life is completed.

The Opposition between the Kinship Ties and the Marital Ties of Spouses, and its Resolution

All her life a woman is subject to the pull of her patrilateral kinship ties. As a wife, however, she must submit more and more to the contrary pull of her marital ties. Her husband is even more strongly ruled by his ties with his natal family and patrilineal kin. Many of the chances and changes of marriage come down to the question of how the partners adjust themselves to the opposing loyalties and interests associated with their divergent kinship ties. A marriage reaches stability when the partners achieve common interests and mutual bonds strong enough to hold them together in the face of their respective patrilateral kinship ties. That is why the birth of children plays such a vital part in stabilizing a marriage.

Marriage, then, is in one aspect a unique relationship between one man and one woman; in this context, peculiarities of personality influence the fate of a particular marriage. In another aspect, or more accurately, perhaps, at the other end of the scale of marriage relations, it is a union between a man and a woman who represent and remain

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586 684 We have previously said that the Tallensi have no institutionalized procedure for divorce. This needs to be qualified. A very drastic procedure to which we have referred in our earlier book[1] exists by which a man can get rid of an objectionable wife. It is usually described as 'blowing (on)' (*pɛbh*) a wife, for it consists in the man's blowing ashes over his wife. By this action he expels her utterly from his house with all her brood. He casts her off and disowns her children; and he forfeits the bride-price. Everybody knows of this custom, and it is held to be entirely licit for any husband. The origins of attached lineages[2] are often attributed to clan sisters who were allegedly divorced in this way. But it is impossible to get a record of a single case that has occurred within the last forty or fifty years, or, indeed, within living memory. Though natives say that a man could, if he wished, 'blow on' his wife if she angered him continuously, or if she were dissolute, or were objectionable in any way, in fact her delinquencies would have to be of so grave a nature as to imperil his life and the welfare of the family for a man to cut through his marriage ties irrevocably at such enormous sacrifice.

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The example of such a misdemeanour always quoted is concerned with their sexual relations. It is a taboo (*kihər*) for a woman to deny her husband's sexual rights over her. She would do so, by implication, if she were to kick him over in the act of coitus.[3] This is a sin of such gravity that the marriage must be dissolved at once or else disaster will come upon both partners. For it means that husband and wife have fallen out so badly with each other that they have come into sexual conflict.

This is implied, also, in a more symbolic way, if the disagreements between husband and wife come to a head in her attacking him with her stirring-stick (*vugər*) and his retaliating with his bow (*tap*). The stirring-stick, an indispensable implement for cooking porridge, is one of the emblems of femininity, and the bow, the principal weapon of the chase and of warfare, the chief emblem of manhood in Tale custom and ritual. Men are by convention excluded from the kitchen; women, both by convention and by ritual injunction, from the chase, and from contact with its magical and mechanical appurtenances when they are being used for hunting. One of the very rare occasions on which sexual continence is ritually enjoined on men is when they are poisoning arrows for hunting or war. Thus, a fight between husband and wife with bow and stirring-stick is a fight in terms of their opposed sexuality, a repudiation of the fundamental bond of marriage. It is a sin, and the couple will die if they do not immediately sever their marital relationship completely.

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[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv. [2] Ibid., p. 51.

[3] The point lies in the postures adopted by the Tallensi in coitus. As in many other primitive cultures, the woman lies on her back, and the man squats on his haunches between her thighs. She can, therefore, easily push him over with a kick, the natives say.

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Tallensi speak of these two sins against the marriage bond with genuine horror. During my second tour in Taleland, Maankye and his wife died within a few days of each other. Men of the family told me that this was the retribution justly visited on them for having fought with stirring-stick and bow but refusing to part. Such breaches of the marital bond might conceivably provoke a man to 'blow on' his wife, but I have never heard of an actual case. More probably she would be handed over to the lineage elders, to be sent back by them to her father.

Incidentally, the prohibition against keeping a wife who wets the sleeping-mat at night obviously belongs to this class of offences against the marriage bond, though, being involuntary, it is less heinous than the others. The real mystical danger to the husband is that a black ant might crawl through the woman's urine and then sting him. To disgust at the physical fouling of the nuptial bed in this infantile manner, so out of keeping with adulthood, is added fear of the magical consequences of the sexual maladjustment represented by the condition. But here again, in the few cases I know of, the woman was returned to her father through the elders of the husband's lineage.

It should be added that a wife's refusal to allow her husband to have coitus with her on a particular occasion is not regarded as a denial of his rights. This is one of the ways in which a woman gets her own back if she is vexed with her husband. And it would be very uncouth for the man to try to force her to yield to him. 'He coaxes her, until she at last gives him the vagina (*zaŋ pɛn tiu*)', my men friends told me.

The Sexual Rights of the Husband and the Corporate Interests of his Clan

A man has exclusive sexual rights over his wife, as we have said. If any other man has relations with her this is either incestuous or adulterous, and a serious wrong against the husband himself and his effective minimal lineage, section, or clan, according to the structural relations of the husband's and the seducer's effective minimal lineage, section, or clan.

To appreciate the significance of this we must recollect that a woman marries an individual, but marries *into* a lineage and clan. Men, and even women and children, of a clan or lineage speak of the wives of its members as 'our wives (*ti pɔɣaba*)'. If a man sees the wife of a clansman trying to sneak away in flight from her husband, he will take it on himself to bring her back home by force if necessary. If a man's wife is seduced or abducted by a member of another clan, any of his clansmen will take reprisals, if they get a chance, by seducing or abducting the wife of a member of the offending clan. There were many fights in the old days, as we have learnt, between clans because the wife of one clan was abducted by a member of the other.

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613 581 587 This corporate interest of the husband's lineage and clan in his wife, implying, on the surface, a diffused 'ownership' of the woman, is most precisely shown in the joint leviratic rights of clansmen.[1] It is, however, not far in the background of all the relations of a woman with her husband's clansmen, individually or collectively. For it is the commonest and most commonplace expression of the corporate unity and solidarity of the agnatic descent group. And it is not an undifferentiated collective interest or right, but very clearly differentiated in accordance with the segmentation of the lineage.

581 837 543 The crux of this differentiation is the sexual relationship of husband and wife. As his sexual partner a woman is the wife of her husband in a rigorous sense that distinguishes him from all his clansmen, both in relation to herself and in relation to her paternal lineage and clan. Unlike the other reciprocal rights and duties of matrimony, those that pertain to sex are unconditionally binding on the spouses and strictly reserved to them. A man's authority over his wife in other respects is often shared with others—his parents, for instance. His sexual rights over her cannot be shared. In the economic management of the household a woman has some freedom of action; she has none in her sexual relationship with her husband. Nor is a husband sexually free, in the same way, for instance, as he is free to dispose of property acquired by his own efforts. Though he is nominally free to indulge in extra-marital liaisons, he can in fact only do so clandestinely and at the risk of friction with a jealous wife. Sexual relations are licit in wedlock; outside marriage they are illicit, especially for a woman; before marriage no social cognizance is taken of them if they do not involve adultery or incest. Love affairs between distant members of the same clan come into this category of tolerated illicit sex relations, hence their irrelevance to the function of sex in marriage.

848 This is a consequence of the stress Tallensi lay on legitimate parenthood, for which marriage is a *sine qua non*. Tallensi express contempt for the Gorisi who, it is notorious, often constrain a daughter to 'sit at home and bear children' to augment her father's family. Though Tallensi do not approve of a girl's bearing a child before marriage, no moral stigma attaches to her. She has no difficulty in finding a husband, if she is physically and mentally normal. Her illegitimate child (*yi-yeembii*) is welcomed by her parental family, especially if it is a daughter. For instance, Pa'anbobis has a sister, now a staid elderly woman and mother of a legitimate family, who had an illegitimate daughter in her youth. This girl was married off by Pa'anbobis's father, who was entitled to her bride-price. She bore a daughter and was then taken away from her husband because he failed to pay the bride-price. When she married again her daughter remained behind as a 'child' of the family, and Pa'anbobis will receive her bride-price. People said he was a lucky man.

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

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684 Badiemaal, is this how you behave?
Zimbil-Badiemaal will never inherit the (lineage) *bɔyar*;
577 Why did you copulate with Naaho's wife?

539 *Badiemaal, pɛnzierug, woo-oo!*
Bakyɛlbanɔyɑ a bumbarəŋ.
Zimbil-Badiemaal, u a baa.

Badiemaal, i ɛŋa ŋwala?
Zimbil-Badiemaal ku vaa bɔyar;
I nyɛb Naah pɔya bo?

It was widely held that both of these men would take the first opportunity to get out of Taleland.

•613 The Tallensi explain that such acts are so severely reprobated because
684 they cause deep and irreconcilable 'enmity' (*diuŋ*) between father and
son, brother and brother, and this is a mortal blow to the solidarity
577 of the family and the lineage. They arouse the wrath of the ancestors. If the injured father, brother, or son does not bring the matter up before the elders of his medial lineage or maximal lineage, he will be struck down by the ancestors. If he does, he must be ritually reconciled with his offending son, brother, or father. But in spite of such a formal reconciliation, 'the enmity remains within'. The sinner will never be able to offer sacrifice to his injured father with a clear conscience, or an injured son to the spirit of his father who so grievously sinned and offended him; nor may two brothers between whom this bitter inner discord prevails sacrifice together. Therefore, as the scornful song about Badiemaal declares, the sinner cannot, with a clear conscience, inherit the shrines common to the lineage; and since a man's sins spiritually taint his children and children's children, the sinner's whole line of agnatic descendants will be virtually outcast from the moral unity of the lineage, even if they are allowed to participate formally in the cult of its ancestors. Again, a man who has seduced his brother's wife cannot inherit her after his death, for he has broken the bond of brotherhood. The incestuous sexual act is sinful because it disrupts the moral relationship of father and son or brother and brother, and thus undermines the solidarity of the lineage at its core. There is a magical deterrent as well, which reflects this. If two men have sexual relations with the same woman and one of them gets ill, the other may not see him; it would cause him to sink and perhaps die; and to shun a sick parent, sibling, or child is the very negation of family solidarity.

593 A man's 'fathers', 'brothers', and 'sons' within the limits of the nuclear
613 lineage are the men who have the most direct interest in his wife, especially in her reproductive powers. They will all be concerned in, and one or other of them will be responsible for, the payment of her bride-price. His children mean almost as much to them as to him. They

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593 613 [587] replenish the lineage. They are under the ritual and jural authority of his own or proxy father, during the latter's lifetime, and may pass into the ritual and jural custody of one of his 'brothers' on his death. If he dies, a 'brother' will have the first and strongest claim to his widow's hand. Yet these are the men who must most rigorously respect his exclusive sexual rights over his wife and most staunchly defend them against all others. Men of the same nuclear lineage can substitute for one another in all relationships of filiation; for these are the relationships that constitute them a corporate unit. They dare not usurp one another's role in the marital relationship; this would bring them into competition with one another. The sexual bond is the heart of the unique person-to-person aspect of marriage, and sexual competition the negation of the tie of common descent and the greatest source of inter-personal and inter-group conflict. Lineage and clan have a corporate interest in a wife of any member of the unit as the mother of future members of the group, and in her offspring. But no member of the unit may have a personal sexual interest in her while her husband is alive.

613 835 577 We can see, now, why sexual relations with a sister or a daughter are so much less reprehensible than incest with a wife of the lineage. Incest with a sister or daughter does not destroy the solidarity of the males of the nuclear lineage for it does not imply rivalry between them. She belongs to all of them equally by birth; she is genealogically and socially identified with them; she and they already have defined rights and duties and sentiments of attachment to one another; as a member of the lineage, she has as great an interest in their solidarity as they have and the physical replenishment and perpetuation of the lineage is of as much concern to her as to them. In relation to her lineage siblings, sexual gratification as a source of pleasure is distinguished from the reproductive function. In terms of the latter she is identified with the lineage as a whole. The common interest a woman's agnates have in her as a woman is in her reproductive powers being placed at the service of another genealogical group in return for the bride-price, and not, as in the case of a wife, in her reproductive powers serving the interests of their own group.[1] If a man desires his sister or daughter sexually it must be a matter of mere lust (*kərih*), a foolish impulse, and not an expression of his desire for progeny as a socially mature adult. The gratification of lust, contemptible as it is in these circumstances, does not shatter the moral unity or injure the common interests of the lineage as does the usurpation of procreative rights over a wife. It does not, like the latter, destroy a father's authority over his son or a son's filial piety towards his father; for though it is a perversion of the social role of father or brother, it is not a usurpation of critical rights.

835 613 What has been said of the nuclear lineage applies in only slightly lesser degree to the inner lineage—the widest corporate unit responsibly

[1] Cf. p. 250 below.

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concerned with the marriages of its members. Beyond the range of the inner lineage but within that of the medial lineage there is some doubt as to whether intercourse with a woman member is incestuous or not.[1] Feeling varies according to the span of the unit and the number of segments it includes. Beyond the range of the medial lineage it is not uncommon for men to have affairs with women of their own maximal lineage or clan. The attitude towards incest with a sister or daughter is stretched to the point of complete tolerance. Sexual relations with a distant clan-sister (*pɔyɛyabəlɔg*) do not clash with the habits, morals, and organization of family life nor with those of lineage or clan relationships. Indeed, the structure of the society practically compels a man who wants a lover (*gab*) to seek for one among his own clanswomen. Any woman not genealogically related to him is someone he is allowed to marry. His sexual interest in her is an interest in her for the sake of offspring. The Tallensi attach so much importance to marriage that they think it absurd and despicable for a man to desire only a sexual liaison with a woman he can legitimately marry. Owing to this and to their tacit appreciation of the critical function of the sexual relationship in marriage, they have the utmost scorn for anyone who tries to seduce a girl he is courting. One of the strictest points of the etiquette of courtship is that the man must make no sexual advances to the girl; inquiries prove beyond doubt that it is extremely rare for courting couples to break this rule. For, apart from etiquette, it would also be an infringement of the taboo against a man's having sexual intercourse with a woman of his father-in-law's—or potential father-in-law's—clan in the latter's settlement.

A distant clanswoman is in a different position. One cannot marry her, but at the same time she is not so closely identified with one or so familiar as a sister. She is not felt to belong to oneself as one's sister or daughter is. Her genealogical and social identification with one's clan seems to be merely a formal usage and this is enhanced by the knowledge that she will marry out. She is the unmarriageable stranger. One can desire her and enjoy her for sexual gratification without an interest in her reproductive powers and without prejudice to her later legitimate marriage. A girl's clan-brother lover is often the most influential go-between in her courtship. Sexual intercourse with a married clanswoman is, of course, adultery from her husband's point of view. It may create trouble between her husband's inner lineage and her own. The head of her inner lineage will demand apologies from the head of her lover's inner lineage and may insist on a ritual reconciliation. There will also have to be a ritual reconciliation between the adulterer and the woman's husband's lineage. Cases of adultery very often take this form and that is one reason why husbands do not like young wives to stay long at their parents' homes.

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 204.

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By contrast, sex relations with the wife of a member of the same lineage or clan outside the range of the inner lineage is a wrong. It is not incest, but the most reprehensible form of adultery. It does not bear the same moral stigma as the corresponding form of incest, nor does it carry religious penalties for the adulterer. Unless the two men concerned have personal cognatic ties, which makes the offence more serious, they are related to each other only as members of related lineage segments. Their personal identity is submerged in the corporate unit, and the offence is interpreted as an injury to the husband's segment by the culprit's segment of a like order. What is a moral and ritual offence in the inner lineage shades over into a misdemeanour or jural injury in the wider lineage. The shift of evaluation is correlated with a change in the intensity though not in the kind of interests involved, and a widening of the span of the unit. The wider lineage has similar but less direct interests in a man's wife than his inner lineage; its unity and solidarity are of the same order as, but less intimate than that of the inner lineage. It has a jural and political unity and solidarity, primarily associated with formal sentiments of amity and mutual loyalty; whereas the cohesion of the inner lineage (based as it is on common economic interests, co-operation and consultation in the everyday affairs of life, contiguous residence, and minimal internal segmentation for jural purposes such as marriage arrangements with other lineages) is primarily moral, and associated with strong emotions of person-to-person amity and loyalty. Thus, beyond the range of the inner lineage, when the customary ritual reconciliation between the segment of the adulterer and the segment of the husband has been completed, the matter is over and done with so far as the public relations of the parties are concerned. No material compensation is made to the husband, and, in the absence of a judicial system, there is no one who can inflict a penalty on the adulterer. The wronged husband may harbour resentment against his wife's seducer; the magical danger inherent in their seeing each other if either is ill remains as a barrier between them; but the corporate unity of the lineage and clan to which they both belong is restored.

Still, adultery with the wife of a clansman or of a member of a linked maximal lineage[1] (to which the same rules apply) creates dissension in the corporate body. It violates the principle that all men of the clan have a formally equal interest in the wife of a fellow member. It leaves behind rankling animosity that hinders united action. For these reasons it usually arouses an outburst of anger against the wrongdoer. Public opinion is a strong sanction against it therefore. Though cases are far from common, they occur more frequently than the corresponding form of incest. I was able to obtain details of a few cases that occurred immediately before and during my stay in Taleland. In one case the husband and his brothers were so outraged that they fell upon the offender in his

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vi.

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homestead, thrashed him soundly, and destroyed many of his personal belongings. This is typical of the anger stirred up by adultery within the clan. Such action would not be taken against a man who committed incest with a father's or brother's wife, though he might be sent to Coventry for a time. For this kind of incest is, at bottom, a question of conscience. The public reaction with regard to it is of no consequence compared with the vileness of the sin and the wrath of the ancestors.

If a man's wife is seduced by a member of another clan, this is also adultery, as has been mentioned, and a wrong against the husband's clan. If the two clans have local or structural ties, the breach must be mended by the prescribed ritual reconciliation. If they have no such ties, no redress is available to the injured husband's clan. He and his clansmen will try to 'cancel the debt (*kɾɔg samɔr*)' by seducing the wife of a member of the clan that has wronged him, when any of them gets a chance of doing so.

A man's exclusive sexual rights over his wife are secured, also, by mystical sanctions to which the woman is subject. If she has sexual relations with any man other than her husband she commits a grave sin. It is, as the natives say, 'dirt' (*dayɔt*), mystical defilement. It may bring sickness or death on the woman's husband or children or even on herslf, for it is a serious affront to her husband's ancestors. As we have noted before, adultery (*pɔyambɔɔn*, lit. woman-thing) in a wife is regarded with revulsion not unmixed with real dread. The woman has committed something not far short of sacrilege, for she has flouted the rights of her husband's lineage over her reproductive powers. Hence she cannot be admitted to his home again until she confesses before the shrine of the lineage ancestors, the symbolic incarnation of the lineage itself. The threat to the life of the lineage is felt to be so grave that among the Hill Talis an adulteress is forced to confess at the External Boyar,[1] the supreme ancestor shrine. Men do not hesitate to use the most callous third-degree methods, short of physical maltreatment, to exact a confession from a wayward wife.

Lastly, a man's wife continues to belong to him sexually after his death until his final funeral ceremonies have been made. Apart from a few ritual observances in sign of mourning, which do not embarrass her greatly, a widow is free to go about her normal life in the interval between her husband's death and his final obsequies. But she is subject to one iron taboo: she may not have sexual relations. It is a much graver sin than during her husband's lifetime, endangering not only her children and herself but her husband's spiritual status. A dead man whose wife has *kaa gaba*, broken the mourning of widowhood, as this misdemeanour is called, cannot have descendants given to him as spiritual wards, for his spiritual status is smirched. It is for this reason that, when

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

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CHAPTER V

PARENTS AND CHILDREN IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE LINEAGE

Some General Principles Recapitulated

ALL Tale genealogical connexions go back to the fact of procreation. Hence the relations of parents and children are the focal point of the whole kinship system. Our task here is to investigate the notion of *dɔyam* in its primary social context.

We have emphasized elsewhere that the social structure of the Tallensi is not intelligible if it is stripped of its temporal dimension.[1] The essence of the lineage system is its continuity in time; from this comes its strength and its stability. But it might have been otherwise. Such a system might well, with each generation, grow narrower and more rigid in all its parts, like an endogamous aristocratic caste. Or it might, as has happened with the Tallensi, spread itself more and more widely by continual ramification and so keep its strength without losing suppleness.

How has this come about? The central dynamic factor is the pattern of relations between parents and children, especially between fathers and sons. The continuity of the lineage is a continuity of successive generations, and this has two aspects. There is the straightforward, cumulative continuity of descent, epitomized in the notion of patrilineal descent; and there is the dialectical continuity of the filial generation ousting and replacing the paternal generation. In terms of patrilineal descent, father and son are identified with each other and united by common interests; in terms of the sequence of generations, they are not. Indeed, there comes a time in the lives of father and son when they almost seem to be rivals. In a lesser degree this holds also for mothers and daughters. We shall have a good deal to say on this topic in what follows.

The strength and stability of the Tale social system is in part a result of the institutionalized means the culture offers for the reconciliation of conflicting motifs in the focal field of social relations. They enable a balance to be struck between the common interests of successive patrilineal generations and their divergent interests due to the difference of generation, as well as between the centripetal pull of the agnatic line and the centrifugal drive of matrilateral kinship. The principle of reciprocity is of outstanding importance in this context; and the structural mould that makes these reconciliations possible is the ramifying form of the lineage.

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iii, and my paper 'Descent in the Social Structure of the Tallensi', *Africa*, July 1944.

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one's parents and play a part in one's upbringing can, and in certain circumstances must, stand to one in the relation of proxy parents. The rule applies most directly to the men of the same domestic unit who are identified with one's father by generation and by social role—to one's father's brothers (including his full and half-brothers and first cousins on his side, who are his prospective successors; and to one's mother's sisters (*nentaaŋ*). If these men and women all belong to the same household they are directly concerned with the production of food, the provision of shelter, and the satisfaction of the other wants of the unit upon which the physical welfare and growth of a child depends. If the men belong to relatively autonomous economic units but to the same domestic unit, they will nevertheless have a common interest in the family patrimony, to the inheritance of which they all have rights, and a common ritual dependence on the immediate ancestors of the nuclear lineage. The women will sometimes help in caring for one another's children; the men will sometimes help one another in farming and always act as a unit in ritual and jural matters under the authority of the most senior of them. And the ritual care of a child is of as much importance as its physical care. A child will not thrive (*maan*) if it is not under the spiritual wing of its patrilineal ancestors, as we have learnt.

Outside the domestic unit the terms *ba* (father) and *ma* (mother) and the distinctive modes of behaviour correlated with them, are not extended beyond the expanded family (i.e. the family cluster built up on the inner lineage) in normal circumstances. The only exception is in the case of a uterine kinsman or kinswoman of a parent, who is identified with the foundress of the uterine line and is therefore described as a 'father' or 'mother' irrespective of genealogical distance.[1]

Within the clan or maximal lineage it is a cardinal rule that generation differences are not recognized beyond the limits of the inner lineage. 'Begetting does not cross the (inner) lineage—*dɔyam pu yakɔt dug la*' is the Tale maxim. This is correlated with the structural relations of the inner lineage to lineage segments of higher order. The inner lineage is likely to be the widest segment with a common interest in patrimonial land. In relation to the clan or the maximal lineage it is usually the smallest recognized corporate segment, whose members are significant for the clan only as members of the segment. As will be remembered, it is also the unit within which sexual relations with a co-member's wife are definitely sinful. In short, the inner lineage (and the family cluster which is its residential and familial correlate) marks the limit beyond which a person takes part in corporate activities not in his own right and in his personal capacity but as a member of the

[1] Kinship terms without inverted commas stand for the primary meaning of the terms, e.g. (natural) father; those between inverted commas stand for the extended or derived meaning of the term, e.g. (classificatory) 'father'.

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602 segment. Clansmen beyond these limits are no longer concerned with
●613 the rearing of a child. They are not directly involved in either the economic or the educational or the ritual responsibility for its passage through life. Hence they all fall into the broad category of clan kin (*yidem*) or clan brethren (*mabiis*) irrespective of age or generation, though individuals among them might be addressed by specific kinship terms, in certain situations, as an honorific gesture. Tallensi feel that
[736 768] a mother's brother (*ahəb*) is a nearer kinsman than a contemporary of one's father of another inner lineage of the same clan; and while it is not uncommon for an orphan to go and live with his *ahəb*, it is very rare for an orphan to join the household of a clansman of a different inner lineage.

602 613 593 Tale jural and ritual institutions show, and intelligent informants perceive quite clearly, that the emotional elements in the relationship of parent and child are distinct from the jural and moral elements. There are both pragmatic and ritual sanctions for the latter but not for the former. Indeed the emotional elements sometimes serve as a sanction or as a rationalization of conduct in the relations of parents and children. With natural parents the emotional elements and the jural and moral elements of the relationship are completely interfused. With proxy parents the former yield precedence to the latter, and it is often easier to study the jural and moral elements of the relationship with proxy parents than with own parents. The widest range within which the relationship of successive generations is recognized is principally distinguished by ritual and ceremonial customs. We thus get a series
[601] beginning with people who will describe each other, if questioned, as 'my own father (mother) (*m-mɛŋ ba* (*ma*))' and 'my own child (*m-mɛŋ bii*)', or by some equivalent phrase; stretching to those who refer to each other as *ba-pit* or *ma-pit*, younger father or mother (or if it is a father's older brother or mother's older co-wife, *ba-bier* and *ma-bier*), and *bier*[1] *bii*—child of older sibling of the same sex (or *pit bii*—child of younger sibling of the same sex); and ending with people who say of their classificatory parent or child 'I only call him father (mother, child) (*mbuon u la mba* (*ma, bii*))'. There is always a physical difference of generation between own parents and children, generally such a difference between close proxy parents and their siblings' or co-wives' children, but quite often little or no difference of age between classificatory parent and child at the limit of the range. It is quite a common thing to meet

[1] *Bier* is the common term for senior by age or generation; but it is a curious point that the usage quoted above is not exclusive. Tallensi also describe a father's older brother as *ba-kpeem* (elder father), and a mother's older co-wife as *ma-kpeem*. But this form is more commonly used to refer to a grandparent. The context makes it clear whether the reference is to a proxy parent or a grandparent. The use of *kpeem* instead of *bier* may be a borrowing from the Gonja and Namnam, whose dialects are closer to Mole than to Dagbane and who have the dialect variants *kema* and *yɛbaga* for senior and junior.

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children of about the same age playing together who are classificatory parent and child. A 9- or 10-year-old will explain that he calls his companion 'father' or 'child' because 'my father begot (*dɔŋa*)—or was begotten by—his father and calls him child—or father', using the concept *dɔŋ* in its generalized sense of a recognized relationship of belonging to successive generations.

The decisive tests are in terms of the jural and ritual relations in which kinship comes into action, and not in terms of a count of generations. Thus paternal authority is an aspect of the organization of productive co-operation in the household; it accompanies defined property rights, and entails jural responsibilities in matters like marriages and deaths as well as ritual duties to the ancestors. These are the things that make up a father's social role. Postponing further consideration of this for the present, we may note that, broadly speaking, three zones can be discerned within the limits of the inner lineage. First, that of Ego's natural parents, who exercise the full social roles of parents; second, that of Ego's proxy parents, seldom more distantly related to the natural father than agnatic second cousins (and their wives), and distinguished by the fact that they share and may take over the social roles of the natural parents; and third, that of Ego's classificatory parents, who are most unlikely (for no rigid line of demarcation can be laid down) to take on the true parents' social roles. The authority and responsibility of a classificatory father is of a general nature, and a man is subject to it only in virtue of his lineage membership.

As we shall find later, these principles hold not only for the classificatory extension of parent–child relationships but also for siblings and matrilateral kin. The regulating mechanism is the lineage structure.

We are defining the gradations that can be observed in the tone and emphasis of the parent–child relationship in the broadest terms. We are speaking of norms; and as we have previously remarked, the norms do not always emerge as simply as this in the actual relations of parents and children. They are subject to the distorting influence of many social and personal factors in this as in other departments of Tale life. Da'amo'o, who ran away from home as a boy when his mother died, must have had very little love for his old father, who was, by all accounts, a hard, arrogant, and demanding martinet. Baŋ, on the other hand, who lost his own father in early childhood and grew up under the care of a distant lineage-brother of his father, Tɛndaan Gieŋ, whom his widowed mother married, was deeply attached to the latter.

As in most primitive societies, there are always a number of people whom a Taləŋ, child or adult, will refer to as his 'father' or 'mother', or 'child', at any given time. But, as has already been suggested, a natural parent or own child is clearly distinguished from others to whom one stands in the same social relationship. It is enough to visit a large domestic family for half an hour, at a time when the whole

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family is at home, to see this, especially where young children are concerned. With adults the discrimination is not so obvious in the ordinary daily routine as with children. I have seen a babe of six months left in the care of its mother's co-wife, whimper and strain eagerly towards its mother when it saw her arrive at the homestead with a load of firewood in the company of two other women of the household. An older child will run to its own mother for protection, if it is frightened, clutching her knees and thrusting its face between her thighs. A small boy of 3 to 6 years of age will try to follow his own father about wherever he can; and a little girl of this age hangs around her own mother, as she gets on with the household tasks, in a way that would be impossible with her mother's co-wife. On the other side, one can easily notice the difference between the sympathy and often grief of a woman over the illness or death of a co-wife's child and the utter prostration into which a mother falls if such a misfortune strikes her own child. Similarly, a man shows deep concern over the sickness or death of his brother's child. He will abandon a visit he has planned to a relative, give up work for the day, shelve any plans he may have made; for next to a death, nothing is so upsetting to a Tale household as the illness of a child. But this is as nothing compared with his grief over the death, or his distress at the illness of his own child.

This affective discrimination of own parents and own children is the psychological counterpart of the differentiation of descent lines within the lineage and of segments within the family. Sentiment and structural relationships go hand in hand and the ritual superstructure of Tale society mirrors both. This consistency of the total scheme of social relationships means that we can make inferences about aspects of the relationship between parents and children that are not expressed in their ordinary intercourse, from ritual ideas and practices and from the changing pattern of co-operation and association between them. The fact that a man can only sacrifice directly to the spirits of his own parents and to antecedent ancestors through his own parents, and not to or through the spirits of proxy parents, is as important a factor in the unique bond of parent and child as the fact that a child is usually brought up by his own parents.

Structural arrangements and ritual ideas show that, in spite of the precise discrimination of own parents and own children, proxy and classificatory parents do have a parental role even during the lifetime of own parents. They take pride in these children, and speak of them as 'my children'. Everyone who is 'father' or 'mother' to a person must be treated with the respect due to a parent and has some degree of authority over him or her. I recall one day seeing Sinkawol, a young man of about 25, instructing Kyekambe, a lively boy of about 12, in a task connected with house-building. They both belonged to the inner lineage of which Nyaanzum of Kpata'ar was the head. This lineage

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presents a remarkable jumble of ages and generations owing to the longevity and protracted fertility of its founder, Kunkɔŋki. Because a period of about fifty years elapsed between the birth of Kunkɔŋki's first son and the birth of his youngest son, the latter's children are 'fathers' to his older brothers' children, some of whom are three or four times their age. That is how Sinkawol came to be the classificatory 'son' of Kyekambɛ. Now and then Sinkawol had to speak sharply to his pupil. I asked if he would hit the boy if he did not obey his instructions. 'Oh no', replied Sinkawol gravely, 'I cannot strike him. He begot me. He is my father. If he were my brother or my son I wouldn't hesitate to clout him.' Kyekambɛ could not exercise authority over Sinkawol owing to his social immaturity and inexperience. But he would take precedence of Sinkawol in matters of inheritance, and when he grew up would be entitled to precede Sinkawol in rights of succession to ritual office, if he wished to.

Proxy and classificatory parents also feel a responsibility for the welfare of their 'brothers' ' children. Thus if two brothers have separate households, they are not obliged to assist each other with food in times of shortage; and pride restrains a man from asking for help from a brother who is economically independent of him. I have seen men grow wan with hunger, through living for days on end on nothing but wild herbs; but they would never ask for assistance from their better-off brothers. It is up to the latter to offer a gift of grain voluntarily. And when such a gift is given (it is usually only 3 or 4 lb. of grain, enough for a couple of meals) it is offered as a gift for the children and their mothers. The giver will send a calabashful of grain to his brother's wife, with a message that it is for the children. As the natives always say, 'Your brother's children are your children. You cannot see them growing thin with hunger and let them starve.' A woman, too, will sometimes give food to the children of a co-wife of the same joint family, if the two women get on well together.

A proxy parent's authority over his or her classificatory children during their own parent's life cannot be exactly defined. It depends on the situation in which authority is exercised, on the personalities and economic relationships of the people concerned, and especially on the genealogical closeness of own parent and proxy parent. Ɔmara and Saandi are agnatic first cousins (brothers, in native terms) occupying adjoining semi-detached homesteads. They do not farm together. Saandi has no direct responsibility for feeding Ɔmara's children or for educating them. He is, however, directly interested in their welfare and upbringing. For as the head of the nuclear lineage, he must be consulted, and will have an influential, though not the decisive voice in all matters of a jural or ritual kind affecting Ɔmara's children—such matters, for instance, as the marriage of a son or daughter, or the rites of placing a child under the ritual guardianship of an ancestor. If he

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considering this situation more closely as it will give us a further insight into the working of the classificatory principle.

The simplest and clearest index to it is in certain observances at the funeral of any man of one's father's generation. A man whose 'father' is alive may not perform the principal rites such as the killing of the goat or sheep from which the loin-cover for the corpse will be cut, or the rites of 'entering the *zoŋ*'; and he may not eat the ceremonial food associated with or consumed in these rites. To infringe these taboos is not only an insult to one's 'father' but a sin, since it is equivalent to wishing him dead. There are men whose proxy or classificatory fathers are alive who know more about ritual matters than their seniors. I have seen such men stand by and direct others in the performance of funeral rites which they themselves are forbidden to carry out. I have seen them raging with exasperation at the incompetence of the old men or women who were carrying out the rites; but they would have been shocked at the suggestion that it would save temper and trouble if they performed the rites themselves.

Again, the application of the notion varies relatively to the dimensions of the lineage involved in a particular situation and the whole constellation of classificatory kinship recognized within it. At one extreme stand matters that concern only the members of the nuclear lineage. That would be the case, for example, if the nuclear lineage assembled to make a sacrifice to its immediate founding ancestor. Thus, to take a lineage we have met in an earlier chapter, if Katiŋoo biis meet to sacrifice to Katiŋoo, only his grandsons and great-grandsons are concerned (see genealogy on p. 68). In such a situation the two patri-segments of Katiŋoo biis (Duun biis and Baa biis) are each formally recognized as a separate unit and the sacrificial meat is divided equally between them. If Ɔmara were dead, the share due to his patri-segment would fall to his sons; and they would, in this context, say that they have no father. They are, in fact, through the eldest son, taking the place of their father in intra-lineage relations; their status is no longer submerged in that of their father. They are thinking in terms of the contraposition of the two component patri-segments of the lineage. Within the limits of the nuclear lineage, the term 'father' (*ba*) means own father and a man whose own father is dead has no father. He speaks of his proxy-fathers (father's brothers and cousins) as his *ba-pirib*, junior fathers, or *ba-biernam*, senior fathers.

The higher the segmentary order of the lineage involved, the wider is the application of this notion. If the situation involves the inner lineage, then the nuclear lineage emerges as the smallest corporate unit recognized. This happens in sacrifices to the founding ancestor of the inner lineage or in certain funeral customs where food contributions are made by the head of the nuclear lineage on behalf of the whole unit. In this case a man whose own father is dead but whose father's brother

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or father's father's brother's son is still alive would not claim to be fatherless. For, in matters where the nuclear lineage acts as a unit in relation to other like units, he has no independent status. The unit is under the authority of a 'father' and a 'son's' status is submerged in the 'father's'. Similarly, if the lineage involved is a medial lineage, the smallest sub-segments recognized will be its component inner lineages. Then a man will only claim to be fatherless if he has no 'father' alive within the inner lineage to which he belongs. Beyond this range—for example where the unit of corporate action is a maximal lineage in which the smallest sub-segments recognized are the medial lineages—the question usually does not arise. At this range generation differences no longer count.

This is a schematic formulation, for there is always a margin of flexibility depending both on the internal structure of the unit concerned and on such adventitious factors as the personal relations of the men who are involved and the character of the situation. Continuity of person-to-person relationships in the routine affairs of the lineage and family help to keep appropriate kinship distances alive. A describes B as his 'father' because he knows that his natural father C during his lifetime always spoke of B as his 'brother'. But human memory is fallible, and in doubtful cases Tallensi take the line of greatest personal advantage consonant with existing structural arrangements.

We shall understand it better if we consider a few examples of how the notion of being fatherless influences behaviour in practice. At Soog one of the component maximal lineages of the clan comprises two major segments which function as medial lineages in corporate affairs. Each of these segments is represented by its head at ceremonies at the External *Bɔyar* of Soog. When Sɛbɔg, the head of one of these segments, died, the most senior remaining member of the unit was his 18-year-old son, Bɔyabil, who therefore succeeded to the headship of the segment. Shortly after Sɛbɔg's death an important sacrifice was performed at the External *Bɔyar*. The beer used for the preliminary libations was being shared among the elders and a calabashful was passed to Bɔyabil. The youth shook his head in refusal. 'No, drink,' said one of the elders, 'it is a taboo. You are an elder now, not a child.' Up till then Bɔyabil had been prohibited from drinking this beer, as no one who has a father alive may drink of it.

Another incident on this same occasion was equally revealing. Certain of the fowls slaughtered in sacrifices to an External *Bɔyar* are known as 'tabooed fowls (*ŋɔkaha*)'. They may not be touched, let alone eaten, by anyone who has a father alive. A man inadvertently handed one of these birds to Diŋkaha's son. Noticing this, Diŋkaha burst into a tirade against the man. 'Do you wish to cause my death or my son's death?' he cried.

In both these instances to be fatherless meant to have no natural

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father or proxy father alive. But let us take a more complicated as well as more commonplace case.

Ziŋgan biis form an inner lineage, one of the five inner lineages that together constitute the medial lineage of Bəɣayiedət yiri of Təŋ-Guŋ. The genealogy overleaf shows the agnatic relationships of the members of Ziŋgan biis we are concerned with here.

The head of the whole inner lineage is Kutəbis. He is also the head of one major segment of the lineage, Pa'anbəbis biis; the head of the other major segment, Zaɣahna'am biis, is Ɔndieso. Within his own segment of Ziŋgan biis Ɔndieso is master. He farms for himself; he sacrifices directly to his own father's and ancestors' spirits; he owns his sisters' bride-price cattle and can dispose of them as he pleases and is responsible for finding the bride-price for his own wives or his sons' wives. In these matters that concern his nuclear lineage primarily he does not acknowledge Kutəbis as his 'father'. He looks upon Kutəbis as only the head of the inner lineage. As such, he must be formally consulted by Ɔndieso in matters that involve jural or ritual relationships with other lineages or clans, such as arise through marriage. Thus, if Ɔndieso's daughter is sought in marriage, it is Kutəbis who receives the emissary with the placation gifts from the bridegroom and keeps the fowl he brings, thus signifying his formal assent and regularizing the marriage. Nevertheless, it is a purely nominal authority that Kutəbis exercises. The real decisions rest with Ɔndieso. Again, if Ɔndieso seduces the wife of, say, a Gbeog man, the injured man's lineage head will protest to Kutəbis and negotiations for the reconciliation rites will be carried out by the latter. He will accept nominal responsibility for Ɔndieso in this matter and will take charge of the arrangements that concern Ziŋgan biis in the reconciliation rites. But the animals required for the rites must be supplied by Ɔndieso himself. To give a third example, Kutəbis will be summoned at once if there is a death in Ɔndieso's family and will preside over the mortuary and funeral ceremonies. But, again, the animals and foodstuffs that have to be provided by the 'owner of the funeral'—the person actually responsible for its performance—must be supplied by Ɔndieso. Kutəbis has, in fact, no power directly to order Ɔndieso to do anything; he has no claims, as of right, on Ɔndieso's services or material help; he has no responsibility for Ɔndieso's welfare, apart from the general moral responsibility he has for the welfare of the whole lineage. As the natives say, he 'owns' Ɔndieso 'with the mouth only (*nuoni maa*)'. All this is implied when Ɔndieso says: 'If it is a question of the (inner) lineage only, I have no father (*la a dug pooni maa, nka ba*).' Kutəbis's relations with him arise from the fact that Kutəbis is *dug kpeem*, head of the inner lineage, custodian of the founding ancestor's *bɔɣar* and of the lineage *zansr*. If he were Ɔndieso's classificatory 'brother' or 'grandfather', it would make no difference to their relations. The symbolic expression

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Bɔyayiedɔt
Ziŋgan
Urɔg
Pa'anbɔbis I
Folla
Somnam
Bayanlɔrɔg
Zayahna'am
Paana
Bo'og
Diuŋ
Ba'an
Yidaan tɛŋŋma
Bayana
Bayana
Mayam
Puyel
Pa'anbɔbis II
Yidaan
Kutɔbis
Paalug
Na'abɔɔ
Ɔndiesɔ
(children)
Da'amo'o
(and brothers)
(children)
Siŋ
(and brothers)
(children)
(children)
Nuclear Lineage
Nuclear Lineage
Nuclear Lineage
4 other segments
(inner lineages)
Dugɔt of Ziŋgan biis
Inner Lineage
(Dug of Bɔyayiedɔt yiri)
Living members of
the lineage italicized.
Bɔyayiedɔt yiri = 1 medial lineage.
(dug of Guŋ section) comprising five inner lineages.

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of this is clearest in funeral customs. If Paanbɔbis II, Kutɔbis's brother, were to die, Ɔndieso would take part in all the rites prohibited to men whose fathers are still alive. He would not refrain out of respect for Kutɔbis. 613

But in matters which involve Ziŋgan biis as a segment of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri, Ɔndieso acknowledges Kutɔbis as his 'father'. Thus when Bontuya, who belonged to one of the other four inner lineages of Bɔɣayiedɔt biis, died, Ɔndieso went to the funeral as one of the representatives of Ziŋgan biis. He then refused to take part in the rites tabooed to men who have fathers alive, saying that if he did it would be an insult to Kutɔbis.

Ziŋgan biis also appear as a unit in reckoning prohibited degrees of kinship for purposes of marriage. As we have mentioned before, the inner lineage is the widest corporate group that is a jural unit in marriage. A distant 'sister's son' (*akɔŋ*) of Kutɔbis would not be allowed to marry a daughter of Ɔndieso. And this criterion applies also to the inheritance of widows. If Kutɔbis were to die, Ɔndieso could not seek any of his widows in marriage, because they are his classificatory 'mothers'. On the other hand, he could do so if Kutɔbis were his classificatory 'brother' or 'grandfather'. He can court the widow of any member of any of the four other inner lineages of Bɔɣayiedɔt yiri since generation differences are not recognized beyond the boundaries of Ziŋgan yiri. 613 582

In spite of the ambiguities lurking in his relationship to Kutɔbis, the predominant affective tone it has for Ɔndieso is that he is a 'son' and will remain a 'child' (*bii*) in public affairs that involve the whole clan as long as Kutɔbis or any of his brothers is alive. Until they are dead there will always be a living if shadowy representative of paternal authority standing between Ɔndieso and his remote ancestors—and that means between him and the world at large, as it impinges on him through the corporate activities of the whole clan. This influences Ɔndieso's attitude to life considerably. He feels that he has not yet reached full social maturity, though he is much more intelligent and better informed than many of the clan elders. One sees and feels this vividly enough in one's intercourse with the natives, but it is not easy to pin down. It came out, for instance, in Ɔndieso's behaviour whenever he accompanied me to the Chief's court. He always took a back seat then, as befits a 'youngster'. It came out also in his attitude to Kutɔbis whom he despised for his uncouth ways and all-round incompetence, but yet deferred to with the modicum of respect that is correct in one's relations with a 'father'. 613 554

A man who can say 'I no longer have any fathers' associates himself with the elders, the *kpɔm*, in thought and action even if he is younger in years than some men whom he calls 'sons'. He thinks of himself as a 'father', in particular in relation to the ancestors, as one who has the duty of watching over the welfare of others. It is most marked among 613 622 554

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613 622 554 the chiefs appointed since the coming of the white man. Unlike their predecessors they were mostly young men when they were appointed, some of them still having their natural fathers alive. But 'a chief', the Tallensi say, 'is the father of his clan. No one can claim fatherhood over a chief' (*sɔ pu dɔya na'ab la*—literally, no one has begotten a chief). Whatever their individual shortcomings, Tale chiefs have one thing in common, and that is a strong sense of responsibility for the welfare of their own clans.

778 554 As usual, this conception has a religious precipitate. It emerges in the status of a man's *Yin* shrine.[1] A man's *Yin* shrine is not fully established until it is ritually 'built' (*me*). Before that it is only a temporary and incomplete entity—even though it has been receiving sacrifices for perhaps twenty years. And usually it is not until a man belongs to the generation of fathers in his inner or medial lineage—that is, attains the status of being 'fatherless' in most social and ritual situations—that he 'builds' his *Yin*. Thus it often happens that a man dies before his *Yin* is built and his son has to carry out this rite. This applies also to the last stage in the development of a man's *Yin*, its removal to the *zanme*, the open space before the gateway. His father's *Yin* shrine is taken indoors and his is put in its place. This is a sign that he has reached the climax of his life. He is not only fatherless, but is perhaps the last of the oldest generation of the inner lineage. He has 'built a house (*me yiri*)', that is, has sons and grandsons to carry on the line and can spend what is left to him of his old age in honoured ease.

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601 613 It must not be thought from the foregoing that Tallensi never extend the term 'father' outside the inner lineage. They speak of all men in the clan or the maximal lineage who belong to the oldest age groups as 'fathers'—and by analogy address any old woman married into the clan as 'mother' and any older clansman as 'older brother'. But these are all courtesy titles. A man will always treat an old man of a different inner lineage to whom he gives the courtesy title of 'father' with respect; but he does not owe him any filial duties or come under his authority directly.

613 554 To round off this picture, let us return again to Ziŋgan biis for a moment and consider the case of Da'amo'o (aged about 35). He is Kutɔbis's late older full brother's (*bier-soog*) son. He occupies the same homestead as Kutɔbis, but has his own gateway and is economically independent of Kutɔbis. Kutɔbis is his proxy father. In no circumstances can Da'amo'o claim to be 'fatherless'. He is not fond of Kutɔbis; but he cannot escape from his jural and ritual authority. Kutɔbis succeeded to his late brother's social role in full; hence Da'amo'o is his 'child' in all ritual and jural respects. This comes out in Da'amo'o's attitude to life. When a man in this position is asked about affairs that concern the clan, or even his inner lineage as a whole, he will often reply 'I am a child, I do not know. You must ask my older brothers and my

[1] Cf. p. 227 below.

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fathers.' Practically the only sphere in which Da'amo'o can act without first obtaining Kutəbis's assent is in economic matters that concern his own household alone. He cannot even sacrifice to his own father's spirit without first telling Kutəbis, though responsibility for making the sacrifice is his and his only.

Da'amo'o's and Ɔndieso's wives had babies about the same time. Ɔndieso went off by himself to consult a diviner in order to find out which of his ancestors was to be the child's spirit guardian; Da'amo'o went with Kutəbis, who consulted for him. In 1936 Da'amo'o collected a part of his sister's bride-price, consisting of a bull and £2. 10s. He showed it to Kutəbis, who is the formal 'owner' of income of this sort, and with the latter's permission sent the bull off to his own father-in-law in part payment of his wife's bride-price. He put away the money. But about this time a rash action of Kutəbis's eldest son brought a long-standing dispute between Ziŋgan biis and another inner lineage of Bəɣayiedət yiri to a head. In order to settle it, Kutəbis, acting on behalf of the inner lineage, had to pay 30s. to the head of the other inner lineage. And as the original dispute and its recrudescence were both occasioned by members of Kutəbis's nuclear lineage (Pa'ana biis) he had to 'find the money'. He obtained the money from Da'amo'o. Complaining about this to me, Da'amo'o said: 'It is not a debt—Kutəbis is my father. I cannot ever demand my money from him. But one day my father-in-law will come for another cow for his daughter's bride-price. Then I will go to Kutəbis and if he has a cow and wants to behave decently he will give it to my father-in-law.' Had Kutəbis borrowed the money from Ɔndieso it would not have been a claimable debt either; but Ɔndieso would not have given him the money without a definite promise to repay it and without some indication of how Kutəbis expected to be able to find the money to repay him. These differences between Ɔndieso's relationship with Kutəbis and Da'amo'o's will be symbolically expressed in their different duties at Kutəbis's funeral. Ɔndieso will undergo none of the rites of mourning and purification that orphans are subjected to, Da'amo'o is bound to go through all of them.

Our discussion of what it means to a Taləŋ to have a father alive or not arose from a consideration of the formula 'Kinship does not cross the (inner) lineage'. For the sake of simplicity we have here spoken of lineages as if they were fixed units of structure instead of slowly changing configurations of social relations. In actuality the slowly changing equilibrium of intra-lineage and inter-lineage relations makes itself felt all the time. What is to-day a relatively clearly defined inner lineage will, in ten years' time, perhaps, be in process of splitting up into two inner lineages. Already there are signs of it in the relations of the two segments of Ziŋgan biis and in another generation it may well be that classificatory kinship will cease to be acknowledged between them.

This margin of elasticity in the range of classificatory kinship within

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the lineage often leads to conflict and it is in these conflicts that the process of fission is often completed. They arise chiefly in connexion with the inheritance of widows and the succession to the lineage *bɔŋar* (that is, to the headship of the lineage)—the two situations in which consistency between the corporate unity of the inner lineage and the recognition of generation differences is most severely tested. What happens is that the heads of what were previously regarded as the component segments of an inner lineage advance contradictory claims to the custody of the lineage *bɔŋar*. One may claim it on the grounds of seniority of generation—being the classificatory father of the other—while his opponent refuses to admit this and claims seniority by age. It is a conflict between 'seniority of begetting (*dɔŋam kpɛmɔt*)' (i.e. by generation) and 'seniority of predestiny' or, as we might say, chance (*Naa-Yin kpɛmɔt*) (i.e. by age). The long-drawn-out quarrel between Yinyɛla and the other elders of Tɔŋ-Puhug turned on a point of this kind. Yinyɛla claimed to be a generation superior to the heads of all the other segments of Lɛbhtiis yiri,[1] but the other elders would not admit the validity of this claim. The genealogical evidence supported Yinyɛla, and the precedents he quoted from the days of his father and grandfather were probably accurate. But that was not the question; the relations of the segments of Lɛbhtiis yiri had changed in the last two generations and, as the elders put it, 'begetting has died out (*dɔŋam kpiya*)'.

An earlier stage in the fading out of classificatory kinship appeared in the controversy over Baroog's widows. Nindɔŋat's eldest son was discovered to be secretly courting one of the women and Baroog's father immediately raised an outcry. Nindɔŋat, he protested, was his 'son' and Baroog's 'brother', hence Nindɔŋat's son would be committing incest if he married Baroog's widow, his classificatory mother. But Nindɔŋat stood by his son, arguing that they were no longer members of a single inner lineage but of two separate inner lineages. 'We are each our own *dug* (*ti a ti dug ti dug*),' he said. The weight of public opinion in the clan was against him, however, and the woman in the case took fright. But a split in the lineage is inevitable, though it may take a generation to complete.

Change of Status Due to Death of 'Father' Shown in Property Relations

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There is more to be said about the social consequences of having or not having a father alive, and we shall revert to the subject later from another point of view. What is so far clear is that a man's social status, particularly in jural and ritual matters, but also in economic affairs, advances step by step with the dying off of his fathers. Strictly speaking, he is not altogether autonomous until he has no more fathers within the range of the inner lineage, but in practice he is free of effective

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 196.

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paternal control when he has no more fathers in the nuclear lineage. The death of his own father marks the beginning of what might be called this process of emancipation, though it is not overtly felt to be that by the natives. As previous references have shown, this is usually the thin end of the wedge that in due course splits the joint family economically and eventually gives the sons jural and ritual independence. It is not too much to say that the cycle of fission and reintegration in the joint family, with its co-ordinate processes of ramification in the lineage, is kept in motion by the deaths of fathers. That is one reason why the relations of successive generations are most conspicuously symbolized in funeral rites and ceremonies.

Underlying all changes in status due to the extinction of particular social relationships are changes in property relations which include, for the Tallensi, both rights over people and rights over material objects and economic resources. These rights pass from one generation to the next by inheritance or succession. There are rights over farm-land, the basic capital resource of the natives, and over homesteads; rights of disposal over livestock and other valuables, as well as over services and social bonds that have been created in exchange for valuables; rights over the working power and allegiance of men, women, and children; and last but not least, rights to the custody of ancestor shrines and other religious objects and to the politico-ritual offices that go with some of them.

All these property relations are tied directly to the lineage structure; they are graded and interlocked with one another in conformity with that structure. They fall into two major categories: patrimonial rights and property, for which the Tallensi have a specific term, *faar*; and individual rights and property, for which there is no specific term. Looking at it through native eyes, in terms of the continuity of the lineage and the march of the generations, we can see why this is so. *Faar* belongs to the lineage—it may be only the nuclear lineage or it may be the maximal lineage. All the members of the lineage are potential heirs to it. But the man who is in possession at a given time has complete freedom in using it—though not in disposing of it. On the other hand, individually acquired property and rights belong to the individual. A 'fatherless' man is free to use, dispose of, or destroy his individually acquired property—be it a piece of land, an animal, a garment, money, or whatnot—as he wishes. A man subject to some degree of paternal authority is in theory obliged to be ruled by his 'father' in the use and disposal of his individual property, though in practice he has a very large measure of freedom in this matter. But the crucial point is this. Individual property becomes patrimonial property when, as inevitably happens on the death of the original owner, it is inherited. In this way it comes about that every segment of a lineage tends to have its own transmissible *faar*.

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The general rules governing inheritance and succession are simple. Because they are so closely tied up with the lineage structure and come under the strongest sanctions of the ancestor cult, they are seldom, to my knowledge, deliberately violated. But they leave room for adjustments and compromises, to some extent also for arbitrary action bordering on injustice, that seem, on the surface, to contradict them. Inheritance and succession follow the lineage and go from fathers to sons in order of seniority by generation or by age.[1] Within the inner lineage, that is, within the range in which classificatory kinship is recognized, seniority by generation (*dɔŋam kpɛmət*) takes precedence over seniority by age (*Naa-Yin kpɛmət*), beyond that range it is entirely a matter of seniority by age. This is what the maxim 'Kinship does not cross the (inner) lineage' implies. Since a 'son' cannot take precedence over a 'father' in the inner lineage, it follows that a man's next senior 'brother' inherits before his oldest 'son'. But Tallensi say 'A father's property is heritable; a brother's property is not (*Ba bon nɔvaagət; mabii bon pu vaagəra*)'. A 'brother' inherits from a 'brother' only what came to the latter from their 'father' (plus what has accrued to it by natural increase or improvement), not what the latter acquired by his own effort. Theoretically all 'brothers' are coheirs and the senior is merely the manager with first pick of the inherited property. It is this which leads to apparent anomalies. Thus when Kurug died his oldest brother Sawɔŋba inherited the *faar* land. But he preferred to stay on in his homestead at Gbambee rather than move back to the lineage *daboog* at Kuorəg. This homestead and the *faar* land surrounding it therefore remained in the hands of Kurug's sons. When Sawɔŋba died there were no more 'fathers' and the oldest generation of men in the inner lineage were all 'brothers'. Again the heir preferred to stay at Gbambee. If the next heir of Sawɔŋba's branch also refuses to go back to the lineage *daboog*, the chances are that the *faar* land there will cease to be regarded as patrimonial property of the whole inner lineage and will become *de facto* the *faar* of the branch that stayed on at Kuorəg.

The point of this is that whereas 'brothers' are equal to one another 'fathers' and 'sons' are not. A 'brother' inheriting lineage *faar* is not on the same footing as a 'father'; he cannot exercise all the rights and the authority of a 'father' which belong intrinsically and exclusively to a 'father's' social status, 'because of begetting (*dɔŋam la zugu*)'. A proxy father who has no brothers alive is at liberty to use his rights over *faar*

[1] The private property of women is an exception, but it is of relatively small importance in the total economy and its mode of transmission is, in fact, quite consistent with this principle: A woman's household utensils and garments are divided among her daughters and daughters-in-law on her death. Any livestock she has acquired by her own efforts or through her cognatic kin go to her sons and become their joint private property. The reason for this is that livestock, unlike utensils and clothes, can breed and so become *faar*, which is not transmissible by descent from or through women.

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in an arbitrary manner and to his personal advantage. If he wishes, he can, for example, pawn *faar* land or consume *faar* cattle in spite of the protests of his 'sons'. They have no redress. Or a father may use his position to distribute parts of the patrimonial land among his sons and proxy sons so that they should all have some good land to work for themselves after his death. The 'son' who inherits cannot cancel such gifts. A 'brother' would arouse fierce opposition from his junior 'brothers' if he attempted to use or dispose of *faar* arbitrarily without their consent. When disputes occur over the division of patrimonial lands or other property that passes by inheritance, it is always amongst a group of 'brothers', never between 'father' and 'sons'.

The difference of emphasis due to difference of generation appears most plainly in the inheritance of rights over people. Tallensi say that 'an older brother (who succeeds to headship of the household or lineage) is like a father (in relation to his juniors) (*Bier ŋman ni ba la*)'. But they also add that he is nevertheless not a father. An oldest brother, as senior son, steps into the shoes of his 'father' in relation to society at large. He does not acquire paternal status within the lineage *vis-à-vis* his 'brothers'. The rights he exercises over dependants are shared by them. And when he is succeeded by a 'brother' the latter does not assume new rights over these dependants but merely extends his existing rights.

Beyond the range of the inner lineage, where generation differences no longer count, questions of inheritance and succession turn chiefly on rights to the custody of the shrines of founding ancestors. The moral and ritual authority of heads of lineages beyond the range of the inner lineage rests on their custody of these shrines. Sometimes, ritual offices like the tɛndaanaship go with the succession to the custody of maximal lineage shrines; and in many cases this also confers rights to control the use of or to have sole use of certain farm-lands vested in the head of the maximal lineage.

It follows from the foregoing that when a 'father' dies there very often is a wide rearrangement of property relations in the whole hierarchy of lineage segments to which he belonged. To take an actual case, let us return to Ziŋgan biis (p. 152). When Yidaan, the head of the inner lineage, died in 1933 he was succeeded by his brother Kutɔbis as head of the domestic family. As Kutɔbis was oldest by generation in the inner lineage he succeeded to the custody of the lineage *bɔŋar* of Ziŋgan.[1] He would not have done so if, say, Ɔndieso had been senior to him by generation, though younger in years.

[1] About a generation ago, as is still the case with many lineages of this order, there was a tract of low-lying (*bo'ag*) land that went with the *bɔŋar*, and the head of the inner lineage automatically had control over it. Any member of the lineage could, however, farm part of it with his nominal permission. After Pa'ana's death this land was divided into three parts, one part going to Ɔndieso's grandfather, another to Baŋanlɔrag's descendants, and the third to Pa'ana's sons.

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613 428 Kutəbis also inherited the lineage *bəyar* of Pa'anbəbis biis, of which nuclear lineage he and his sons and brother's sons form a segment. Again, this might have gone to the head of the other segment of Pa'anbəbis biis if he had been senior by generation or age to Kutəbis. With this *bəyar* goes some land at the now abandoned site of Pa'anbəbis's homestead. If on Kutəbis's death the present head of Bayanlərəg biis, Na'abzə, is still alive it will come to him.

Kutəbis also inherited the ancestral shrines of his immediate forebears Bayana, Pa'ana, and Səmnam. With these shrines go several strips of land, especially the large home farm (*saman*) adjoining the homestead, which are the patrimonial property of Səmnam's line of descent. On Kutəbis's death they will be inherited by his younger 'brother' Pa'anbəbis II. Lastly, Kutəbis inherited some land which had been allocated to his father Bayana as a private plot and thereafter became the patrimonial property of Bayana's descendants.

He also assumed paternal rights over Yidaan's children. As Yidaan's sons farm independently of him, he cannot command their labour, though they are bound to assist him if he is hard-pressed and asks them to do so. In theory Kutəbis has the unrestricted right to dispose of his late brother's daughters in marriage, and to use the bride-price paid for any of them as he pleases. Actually, he would not marry off any of the girls without consulting Yidaan's oldest son, Da'amo'o, and would, as we have seen, hand over the bride-price to Da'amo'o. He retains the right, however, to draw on the bride-price of any of Yidaan's daughters in a difficulty calling for payments he cannot meet. We have quoted an instance of this on p. 155. Kutəbis also nominally inherited what was left of the livestock and clothes Yidaan had amassed,[1] but handed them over to Da'amo'o, retaining only the right to use them in an emergency. As regards Yidaan's widows, the older woman chose to stay on with Da'amo'o, as she was past the age of child-bearing. The younger accepted Kutəbis as she had a child at the breast. But it was confidently said, by members of the lineage, that she would probably leave him when her child was old enough for her to have another.

Parallel Significance of 'Not having a Mother alive'

613 593 784 601 On the principle that both parents have an equally indispensable part in the procreation and upbringing of children, whether or not one has a mother alive is also socially recognized. There is a general taboo binding on everybody who has a mother alive. They may not drink water out of an earthenware dish (*laa*); they must always use a calabash (*yman*), the normal drinking vessel. This is connected with the ritual use of earthenware dishes as food and drinking-vessels in the purification of

[1] This was because Kutəbis and Yidaan were *saarət*, full brothers. As we shall see later, full brothers have a very great degree of social equivalence and are entitled to inherit one another's personal effects in a way that half-brothers are not.

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orphans at funerals. The ritual prohibitions falling on 'those who have a father alive', at funerals of old men, also fall on 'those who have a mother alive', at funerals of old women. But owing to the lesser importance of maternal than of agnatic descent in determining social status, whether or not one has a mother alive is of less social importance than whether one has or lacks a 'father'. The range within which classificatory 'mothers' are socially recognized is the same as for 'fathers', since 'mothers' derive their status from their husbands. But it is only the wives of 'fathers' belonging to one's own nuclear lineage who receive the deference due to a 'mother'. Beyond that range it is a voluntary matter whether or not one treats a 'father's' wife with the respect due to a 'mother'. Putting this in another way, a proxy mother is usually one's own mother's co-wife within the limits of, at most, the expanded family, who might or actually did take one's mother's place in bringing one up. It is this which distinguishes a 'mother' who is a 'father's wife' from one's natural mother's uterine sisters and kinswomen, who are also called 'mothers'. In one matter only is the recognition as classificatory 'mothers' of the wives of all 'fathers' of the inner lineage strictly enforced, and that is in regard to incest. This is of special importance when it comes to the inheritance of widows.

To take an example again from Ziŋgan biis, Da'amo'o and Ɔndieso both call Kutɔbis's wives their 'mothers'. They would not be able to marry any of them if Kutɔbis were to die. But if one of the wives dies, Da'amo'o, having lost his own mother, is obliged to go through the rites of mourning as for a mother. Ɔndieso will not. He may have his head shaven as a sign of mourning for her if she was particularly friendly with his family, or was particularly helpful to him, say by taking care of his wife during a difficult confinement. But this would be a voluntary gesture of respect, not a ritual obligation. If they are both present at a funeral of an old woman who is not married into their inner lineage, Da'amo'o will refrain, out of respect for his proxy mothers, from taking part in the rites forbidden to 'those who have mothers alive'. Ɔndieso will not, unless he wants to make a special gesture of respect to Kutɔbis or his wives. The personal relationships of the people concerned are irrelevant within the nuclear lineage. Da'amo'o, in fact, heartily dislikes Kutɔbis's senior wife and has a strong affection for Ɔndieso's proxy mother and his (Da'amo'o's) classificatory mother, Yinduuŋ, who is living with Ɔndieso. But he cannot escape the mourning rites he must undergo if the former dies, and is not obliged to undergo these rites if the latter dies.

The difference in the conventional attitudes towards a proxy mother and a proxy father is also shown in the way Tallensi look at the duty of supporting an aged parent, a subject we shall consider further in Chapter VII.

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someone in the crowd always cries out that there is no one who can match these achievements or can claim that his father or mother did so.

This is the most dramatic though not the only expression of pride in one's parents among the Tallensi. They always show off an old parent, own or classificatory, with great pride to a visitor. I have often been led out of my way to shake the hand of a blind and senile old man or old woman who was too bemused with age to understand the long speech with which we were presented to each other. Women and children tell the stranger proudly, 'Don't you know so and so? I am his child.' This pride in one's parents is the reciprocal of their pride and satisfaction in the possession of children. It is so marked with old people in part because the Tallensi honour old age as a sign of good luck (*zuɔŋ*). The death of an old parent is an occasion of rejoicing rather than of lamentation for they say, 'Has he not savoured life to the full? (*U pu di ŋɔɔr sa'ahi*).' At the same time the natives say that the death of an old man is a loss to his sons even though he had long relinquished the management of household affairs to them and had only a titular superiority in the affairs of the community. He may be blind, deaf, and senile, as Doohraan was, but he is still the head of the family and lineage, the hub of their unity, and the intermediary between them and their ancestors. However infirm an old man may be of body or understanding he is regularly told of everything that happens in the house, and his consent is always obtained before anything is done in his name, as everything that pertains to the family or lineage must be.

From all that has been said here it can be seen that filial piety among the Tallensi is by no means a simple and stereotyped attitude. Respect, affection, a feeling of mutual identification, and a sense of dependence, supported by the whole strength of the lineage system and the ancestor cult, are mingled with great freedom in everyday intercourse, as we shall see shortly, and with the strain of latent antagonism. It is an indication of the strength and internal consistency of the social system as a whole that ruptures between father and son are not very common.

Filial piety is a significant element in all Tale genealogical relationships. A person's loyalty to and solidarity with his lineage springs from his relationship with his father, his ties with his matrilateral kin from his relationship with his mother. The founding ancestor of a lineage is visualized as its 'father' and the progenitrix of a lineage segment as its 'mother'.[1] A person identifies himself with his patrilateral kin through first identifying himself with his father, and with his matrilateral kin by extending his identification with his mother. Economic motives, jural rules, and ritual sanctions work on the individual through his sentiments of filial piety.

This can be seen clearly in the interlocking of land tenure, local cohesion, and clan solidarity. The land a man owns in his clan settlement

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 201 ff.

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577 is usually land that has come to him by inheritance from his father.[1] It
613 is hallowed land because it has come to him thus. This land is the basis of his local and economic ties with his lineage and clan. In psychological terms it stands for the most significant aspects of his own development and of his relationship with his father. It was here that he learnt to farm, working side by side with his father and thus coming to know every inch of it. His father's social personality is for him closely associated with this land, with the homestead which stands on it somewhere, and with the family graves including, in time, those of his parents, that lie there. When he inherits this land it is the principal sign that he has at length stepped into his father's shoes.

577 The cycle of development through which the nuclear lineage regularly
613 passes shows the working of filial piety very clearly. A typical history
166 is that of Ba'ahug's house. When Ba'ahug inherited the homestead and the home farms of his nuclear lineage, at Tɔŋ-Kuorɔg, about thirty years ago, he had living with him his son Saŋgbɔŋ and his full brother Zɔŋ. Then Ba'ahug died and his brother Zɔŋ inherited the homestead and the patrimony. In due course Saŋgbɔŋ moved out to build his homestead on his own father's part of the patrimonial bush farm at Gbambee, and there he brought up his family. In 1934 Zɔŋ died and Saŋgbɔŋ inherited the homestead and patrimony. He remained at Gbambee, however, until 1936. There had been illness and other mishaps in his family, and the diviners declared that his father, who was buried beside the original homestead at Kuorɔg, was demanding that he (Saŋgbɔŋ) should go back there. So in 1936 he handed over the homestead at Gbambee and some of the land there to his oldest son and returned to take up his abode in the ancestral homestead. For him the cycle of development from the domestically unitary joint family through the phase of its dispersion and back to a phase of unity was completed. The unity would have been more obvious still if he had made his oldest son accompany him to the old homestead, and if his late 'father' Zɔŋ's children had remained with him. Actually Zɔŋ's sons, finding that the land that would now be available for their use was insufficient, decided to move to Biuŋ; and there was no need for Saŋgbɔŋ to summon his own oldest son to come and live with him as the homestead at Gbambee is regarded merely as an outpost of the ancestral home. There is this advantage, also, about keeping up the Gbambee outpost, that when Saŋgbɔŋ dies Zɔŋ's oldest son will be the heir and will return to resume the ancestral home and lands. This will mean that Saŋgbɔŋ's sons will probably have to move out to their father's land at Gbambee, so the homestead might as well be kept up. If Saŋgbɔŋ had died at Gbambee before inheriting the ancestral home he would have been brought home to Kuorɔg for burial beside his father and forefathers.

In the next generation there will be a new development. For Saŋgbɔŋ's

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xi.

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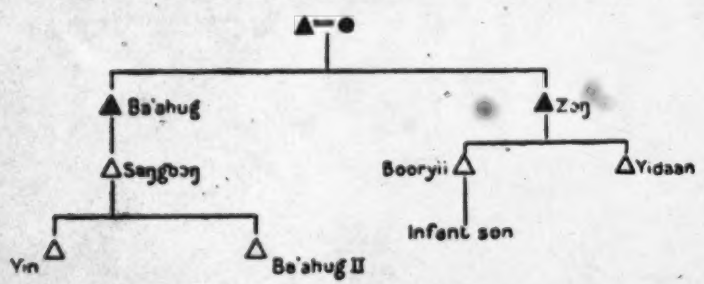
sons their father's home and land has a double location. In terms of their own experience and immediate attachments it is the home and land at Gbambee; in terms of the jural and ritual functions of the lineage it is the home and land at Kuorəg. The oldest of them may go back to Kuorəg when he inherits the patrimony. The younger may prefer to stay at Gbambee when he becomes head of the lineage and leave the Kuorəg homestead and land to the other branch of the lineage. He will be living in what is to him his father's homestead and on what is to him his father's land in the most intimate and personal sense. And when he dies his kinsmen will probably be informed by the diviner consulted on the day he is buried that he desires to be buried at Gbambee and not at Kuorəg. Thenceforth a new home is established for one of the lines of agnatic descent sprung from Saŋgbəŋ. This branch will still maintain close jural, economic, and religious ties with the other branches of the same segment established at Kuorəg and will act together with those branches in all corporate affairs, but it will be independently localized. Thus filial piety which has drawn Saŋgbəŋ back into the local orbit of his ancestral lineage, and will keep him there even after death, will be the ostensible incentive that will make one of his sons establish a new home for his posterity at Gbambee.

The following genealogy shows the agnatic relationship of the individuals that have been mentioned:



And the table on p. 184 shows the cycle of development of this nuclear lineage as we have sketched it.

The natives are well aware, of course, that these processes of dispersion and reintegration in the nuclear lineage arise directly out of the genealogical cleavages and economic needs of its component segments. But the chief sanction for each defined stage in the process is, in their eyes, filial piety. Objectively, it appears to the anthropologist as a socially accepted rationalization or pretext covering a rearrangement of property and jural relations made necessary by economic needs and the logic of the social structure; subjectively, it is felt by those concerned as an irresistible ritual sanction, crystallized as a command from the father's spirit. It works consistently in the direction of keeping the lineage intact

[Text continued on p. 185. - Analyst]

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Date	*At Kuorɔg*	*At Ghambee*	*Elsewhere*
c. 1920	Ba'ahug — Saŋgbɔŋ; Zɔŋ — Booryii		
1933	Zɔŋ — Booryii, Yidaan	Saŋgbɔŋ — Yin, Ba'ahug II	
1936	Saŋgbɔŋ — Ba'ahug II (and other sons)	Yin	Booryii, Yidaan (At Biuŋ)
19—?	Boorvii, Yidaan and their children	Yin, Ba'ahug II and their children	
19—?	Yin [Yidaan and/or Zɔŋ's grandsons in separate homestead?]	Ba'ahug II (Ba'ahug II establishes new home at Gbambee)	[Zɔŋ's surviving sons and/or grandsons may have a homestead of their own at *Kuorɔg*, or at *Gbambee* or at *Biuŋ*]

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in relation to its local and spiritual focus. Economic necessity is undoubtedly the chief incentive to fission in the joint family, but the process of reintegration is as much or more the result of ritual and affective forces.

This is the essence of the pull exercised on every Talən by his father's original home (*dâboog* pl. *dabaar*), and on lineages in their corporate existence by the *daboog* of their founding ancestor. We have already recorded several cases of men who returned to rebuild their fathers' homesteads after many years of absence. As these instances show, it often involves an economic loss when a man gives up fertile land in a peripheral settlement to return to one of the ancient settlements where the soil is less productive. There are many men who in their young days farmed at Biuŋ or Gbambee or Datək and had many cattle, sheep, and goats then but now have no more than their neighbours. Their explanation is that they had to give up their farms in the peripheral settlements to come and rebuild their fathers' original homesteads, thus exchanging plenty for poverty. This was the story of Sayəbazaa and Na'ampaahya, of Saandi, Loobuol-Kugər, and of Sayawuob, and of many more than need be mentioned here, in addition to those already referred to. It was the religious and affective associations of their ancestral homes that drew the Hill Talis back to the hills in 1936 after twenty-five years of exile, in spite of the economic sacrifice this meant for a great many of them. Down on the plains most of them had all the land they needed immediately around their homesteads. It was fertile land, too, won from the uncultivated bush. They were better off for food than they had been on the hills. But they gladly gave up their temporary homes and farms to return to their exiguous stony patches and strips on their hill-tops, the crops of which have to be supplemented by farming bush farms three or four miles away. For all their rationalizations about the better climate and pleasanter surroundings of the hills, the truth was that it was a matter of faith. On the hills they were back among their fathers and forefathers, and this gave them a sense of religious security they had lacked on the plains. It meant, also, that they were back in the right local setting of their clan and lineage relationships.

The return of the Hill Talis to their ancestral homes is a striking case because it involved the building of between 250 and 300 homesteads[1] in two dry seasons and the movement of over 2,000 people. But every dry season, within a settlement, one finds men rebuilding homesteads on the long-deserted sites of their fathers' homesteads. This happens when a man at length succeeds to the position his father held in the lineage structure. So Deemzeet built a new homestead on the site of his own father's homestead when he became head of the section of Puhug at Tongo. Or it may be simply that a man has a series of

[1] A minimum estimate. The total number of homesteads built or rebuilt was probably nearer 500, but I was not able to check this.

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misfortunes and learns from a diviner that this is due to his dead father who is angry with him for leaving his *daboog* site derelict. That was the case with Pa'anbɔbis and Mambaŋya.

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We have said previously that the sentiments, the rights, and the duties of parent and child to one another are traced back by the natives to the fact of birth; but in actual social usage they are fortified by strong ritual sanctions. Tallensi have these in mind when they say that a father's authority is irresistible because 'he sacrifices for you (to your ancestors)'. Your father 'owns (*so*)' you because he begot (*dɔya*) you; and he sacrifices (*kaab*) on your behalf because he begot you; you can only approach your ancestors through your father while he is alive, and if you do so after his death it is always through the intermediation of his spirit. It all goes back to the fact of birth, but the ritual sanctions are the most important instrument by which a father's authority is maintained, as our discussion has several times shown, particularly in the case of a proxy or classificatory father. Siŋ cannot defy his proxy father Na'abzə 'because', as he says, 'he sacrifices for me'; Da'amo'o chafes under the vexations Kutɔbis and his sons frequently put upon him, but he cannot, for the same reason, disregard Kutɔbis's authority over him as his late father's brother. It is very rarely indeed that a man in a paternal position will refuse to sacrifice on behalf of another who is in the position of a 'son' to him; but the fear of this sanction has a restraining influence in cases such as those of Siŋ and Da'amo'o. The whole hierarchy of authority in the lineage rests on this ritual office. Most of the men of Yinyɛla's inner lineage were opposed to his cutting himself off from the rest of Puhug, but they had to 'follow (*dɔl*)' him because he had custody of the lineage *bɔyar* and 'sacrificed for them'.

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PLATE 12

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a. A grandfather with his son's children

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b. The effective minimal lineage: the father, his eldest son (working in the distance), his two small sons, and his two grandchildren out on the farm for the day

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varies from case to case and from lineage to lineage. We have seen how this works out among the members of Zingan biis. Another instance is that of Yinworəb and his 'son' (his grandfather's brother's great-grandson) Kadɛne. Yinworəb gave Kadɛne three shillings to pay the hearing fee when he was summoned to the chief's tribunal. This was not a debt. Three or four months later Yinworəb borrowed a goat from Kadɛne. Again, this was not a debt but it was tacitly understood to be an equivalent return for the loan of the three shillings. By contrast, Loyani used some sheep belonging to Maantiya, his father's half-brother's grandson and therefore his 'son'. This he regarded as a debt because the sheep were earmarked for the payment of Maantiya's wife's bride-price.

Outside the inner lineage, however, a debt is incurred by accepting goods or services from a clansman. The only exceptions are if the lender is also a matrilateral kinsman of the borrower—e.g. a uterine kinsman—or a close friend.

The principle of reciprocity, as seen in operation in the family and lineage, ties on to a more general theory of social action in Tale society. It is a particular application of the principle of equilibrium in the social system. The idea that in the long run mutual services or favours should balance is inherent in Tale social organization. Canalized by the lineage system, it means that a son or grandson or later descendant can make or expect equivalent returns for an action of his father or grandfather or earlier ancestor. It is a matter of pride as well as of moral or jural obligation to see that one benefit is balanced by another. For example, it is a common thing at an elder's funeral to see a distant clansman of his, who is not obliged to do so, bring a sheep or goat as a valedictory offering to the dead. The donor explains that there is a special reason for this offering. The deceased had been a friend of his father. When his father died the deceased brought a goat as a valedictory offering to his father. His goat is a return gift. The maxim that 'debts do not die' springs from this principle; and it applies not only to the relations of the living among themselves but to their relations with their departed ancestors. A grandson may have to atone for his grandfather's sins, as happened with Kuwaas. Years of constant ill luck were attributed by a succession of diviners to the sins of his paternal grandfather, whose name he bore. Kuwaas I, as Chief of Tongo, had betrayed his office by abandoning his clan and seeking only his personal safety once when the Hill Talis attacked Tongo. This was a grave sin against the ancestors, who demanded a large expiatory sacrifice, and until this was paid the sin would continue to lie heavily on the descendants of Kuwaas I. The right of self-help by raiding, and the notion that retaliatory warfare and retaliatory abduction of women are simply 'cancelling a debt (*ikɛg sɔmɛr*)',[1] belong to the same category of ideas. The principle of reciprocity underlies all these categories of social behaviour.

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 236, 245.

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CHAPTER X

SIBLINGS IN THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The Concept of 'mabiirət'

TALLENSI make a distinction between kinship that implies a difference of generation, summed up in the concept *dɔŋam*, and kinship that implies identity or equality of generation, summed up in the concept *mabiirət*.[1] *Mabii* (lit. mother's child) is the general term for a sibling of either sex and of any degree of consanguinity, and it is extended, as we have shown in our previous volume, to corporate groups, linked by patrilineal descent, that are of equal status. Its primary reference is to a sibling by the same parents as the speaker's when only the fact of siblingship is relevant—that is, when difference of age or sex is not relevant to the situation. Tallensi sometimes use the term in contrast with *babii* (lit. father's child), a usage that indicates very neatly the underlying implications of the term *mabii*. Thus Tallensi say that a man's *mabiis* have first claim on the inheritance of his widows, but that his *babiis* are also entitled to marry the widows. To the native this means that a man's brothers of the same *dug* have a stronger claim than his clansmen of other *dugət*—*dug* here being a lineage segment defined relatively to the agnatic distance between a particular suitor for a widow's hand and the deceased. A man of the same inner lineage as the deceased will call himself a *mabii* of the latter by contrast with another suitor of a different inner lineage but the same medial lineage; and the latter will call himself a *mabii* of the deceased by contrast with a more distant clansman, whom he will describe as a *babii*. Thus the use of the term *mabii* implies a relationship between the parties as if they were agnates who have a common progenitrix over and above their patrilineal ties. When a native describes another as his *mabii*, however distant their genealogical ties, he is tacitly implying a close personal element in their relationship for that moment and in that situation, as if they were children of the same parents, by contrast with a pair of distant agnates. A man will speak of a matrilateral relative of a different clan in this way in some situations. Thus a Tongo man, telling me the story of his first visit to Kumasi, related how he had stayed with a *mabii*, a Ba'ari man, who had loaned him the money for his lorry fare. Abroad, in Kumasi or Accra, a Talɔŋ speaks of any other Tallensi he meets there as his *mabiis* by contrast with all the foreigners amongst whom they live. And this is not merely a form of words. Abroad, Tallensi who have no ties of kinship or of locality, who would probably never have met or heard of each other at home, assist one another as if they were kinsmen.

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii, p. 117.

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the widow (or widower) during a funeral, or assist in the rites of purifying the widow or share her meals. Tallensi assert that a breach of this rule is impossible as no man or woman who had not had the experience would take charge of a widow. It is a taboo (*kihər*), and anyone who infringed it would die. Again, owners of diviners' shrines (*bakologo* shrines—the diviner is called *baŋa*) are identified in certain situations, though they do not form a corporate body of any sort. Thus when a new diviner's shrine is being set up for a man certain portions of the beer used in the rites can be drunk only by men who already have such shrines, and it is they who carry out the final rites by which the actual power of divination is conferred on him. Similarly it is only men who have themselves undergone the experience and the treatment who may assist in the ritual of purifying a homicide or a man who has slain a big game animal such as a bush cow. The list of illustrations could be extended, but this will suffice to show how deeply rooted the idea is. It is, however, only a determinant of individual conduct and sentiment, giving rise to *ad hoc* co-operation in certain situations, and not a principle of association in corporate units.

Factors modifying the Sibling Bond

The solidarity and social equivalence of siblings are conditioned by a number of factors. Differences of sex and, between like-sex siblings, of age are important. But distinctions of equal or even greater significance are imposed on siblings by the fundamental principles of the social structure. Siblingship does not cancel out the uniqueness of the individual, as symbolized in the notion of the *Yin*, and socially crystallized in the precise differentiation of the lineage segment which he or she founds. This factor, with its counterpart in the family structure and the economic organization of the household, is not important in childhood, but increases steadily in influence with the years. It is the basis of the fission between fraternal descent lines and, consequently, of the ramification of a lineage sprung from one progenitrix. How it works out, however, in a particular case depends upon the position of each person in terms of patrilineal descent and maternal origin. Thus the sibling relationship, while itself an important constitutive factor of the lineage structure, is reciprocally moulded by that structure. The relationship of brothers among the Tallensi might very well have been different from what it is if their social organization provided for the continuous merging of collateral lines of descent in lineal lines,[1] so that lineage branches springing from brothers were not specifically recognized, but only the inclusive trunk-line deriving from a distant ancestor.

[1] This appears to be the case with the Nuer at higher levels of lineage structure (cf. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, Oxford, 1940, ch. v) and among some Southern Bantu tribes, such as the Zulu (cf. E. J. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulu*, 1936).

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593 capable of; the care of livestock is the responsibility primarily of the younger men and boys, whereas such tasks as house-building and thatching fall principally on the older brothers who have the necessary skill. All labour for the common needs of the household is informally directed by the household head, but every member of the unit is expected to know his duties and to carry them out in co-operation with the others. In this connexion a father may insist on a son's giving up his own plans in order to carry out a job for the common good; a man cannot demand this of a younger brother. He can only give a lead or make a suggestion and rely on the younger man's sense of responsibility and concern for the interests of the household.

593 578 584 Conversely, siblings of the same household are entitled to equal treatment in drawing on the common resources of the household for the satisfaction of their wants. Brothers are entitled to equal treatment in the allocation of food-supplies from the common stock if they are married. If a man has two adult sons—own sons or proxy sons—and pays the bride-price for the wife of one of them, it is considered right for the second to be assisted to marry before his brother is allowed to draw on patrimonial livestock for a second wife. Great importance is attached to this rule in family relations. Injustice in this matter arouses resentment. It is one of the causes of friction between a man and his proxy father, and between half-brothers, that leads to the secession of the injured party, or, very often nowadays, to his leaving home to seek work abroad. Tallensi claim that cases of this sort are not uncommon; but those I was able to investigate show that discrimination in this respect between *ninɔɔ* brothers is usually only one element in a complex picture of motives for seceding. The point stressed by the natives, however, is the principle; and observation shows that it is more commonly honoured than not. An almost ludicrous example of this was Yinworəb's dogged efforts to find a wife for his half-brother Yimbom. He failed, alas, for no girl would stay with so unprepossessing a man as Yimbom.

593 ●613 The notion of sharing is especially important in the ritual relations of brothers or the descendants of brothers. Many examples of this are quoted in our previous book.[1] Its outstanding characteristic is the precise distribution of roles and division of sacrificial or ceremonial foodstuffs, beer, and meat in accordance with the lineage relationships of the participants.

593 867 This emphasis on just sharing among siblings begins in childhood, first when siblings sit down to eat from a common dish, and then in the children's play-groups. I have many times stood by watching with some amusement while a group of small children solemnly divided up a small animal they had killed, a lizard or a mouse, for instance. They are always fair, especially to the younger ones; and they follow the pattern

[1] *Cf. Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

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of distribution employed in the division of sacrificial meat, as they have seen it among adults, with hardly an error. By the age of 8 or 9, boys are sufficiently familiar with the lineage organization to have grasped this pattern.

The division of sacrificial and ceremonial food expresses precisely the genealogical structure of the lineage concerned. The first division is into equal shares for each of the major segments of the lineage; then a further division takes place on the same lines within each segment; and so on down to the smallest segments. Thus one can see the children of an expanded family of two homesteads divide a mouse first into halves, one for children of one homestead, the other half for the children of the other homestead, and then each group apportioning their share equally amongst the children of different mothers in the same joint family.

As these rules show, the configuration of social relations characteristic of brothers is generalized throughout the social structure, not, of course, in all its intimate nuances and particularities but in its structurally relevant norms. Where two persons or corporate groups are defined by descent as 'siblings' or 'brother-groups' they act towards each other as brothers would in a comparable situation. This, as we have previously found, is a fundamental principle of lineage organization and action.

The equality *inter se* of siblings, except for sex and age differences, postulates equality of rights in relation to their 'fathers' and to one another. The fiction by which the token rights of a woman and her children in her father's house are upheld—the theory that but for the accident of birth she might have been a son vested with a son's rights—is evidence of this. These rights become significant when a young man enters into the full productive activities of the household and when a girl gets married. It is in virtue of the labour he contributes to maintain the household, and in virtue of the bride-price she brings in, that youth and girl claim these rights. Thus these rights exist, by definition, only within the lineage framework, in relation to the corporate unity of the lineage. They are epitomized in the rule that brothers are equally entitled to inherit patrimonial property, especially land.

We have previously seen, however, that the entry of a youth into full economic responsibility coincides with the increasing progress of his self-differentiation as a social personality in his own right. There is no inconsistency in this. The unity and cohesion of family and lineage depend upon a balance of rights and duties among all the individuals involved. And the recognition of their rights and duties presupposes their self-differentiation as individuals, partly in terms of their respective maternal origins, but equally in terms of their developing social maturity and productive capacity.

The climax of this process comes with marriage, or more accurately with the establishment of a family on becoming a parent. This brings the

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cleavages between *sunzo* siblings, both on the level of jural and economic relations and in sentiment, more prominently to the fore. It is the starting-point of those intra-familial tensions that, according to native views, stir up jealousies between co-wives who are wives of brothers. As we know, these tensions are said to culminate, very often, in quarrels over alleged unfairness in the apportionment of food-supplies, or over the treatment of children, or other ostensible acts of discrimination between co-wives. This is one of the reasons most often adduced for a man's leaving the paternal homestead to farm on his own. From these tensions arise also those disagreements between brothers over petty trespasses on one another's property or independence, summed up in the conventional formula of 'quarrels about chickens and eggs'. The stage is thus set for the typical process of residential and economic fission in the joint family along the genealogical lines of cleavage inherent in it. The equality in status and rights of brothers in relation to one another within the lineage thus attains its maximum emphasis in the social structure. The natives are well aware of the economic pressures behind this process; but they also see that these pressures would not work out in just the way they do if it were not for the inherent dichotomy in the structure of the family and the lineage. These two factors mutually determine and reinforce each other.

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This brings up a point of some importance. It is conceivable that tension between brothers, whatever it is a symptom of, might result in young men separating after the death of their father, or after marriage, to take up land wherever they can find any. Thus a group of brothers would be scattered without respect to their lineage ties; and this process would in a few generations lead to the disintegration of the present highly localized lineage structure, and the emergence of a system of dispersed intermingled clans such as is found in many West African societies.[1] In fact, as previous chapters have shown, there is a slow process of dispersion in progress among the Tallensi all the time, but it has not led to a breakdown of the lineage system. The lineage ramifies, it does not break up into independent units that sever their genealogical ties with the main branch.

The basis of this is the fact that brothers separate but do not thereby relinquish membership of their maximal lineage. They do not sever their social and personal bonds with one another; which means that they do not forfeit any of their rights or relinquish any of their duties as sons and brothers. They are independent only within the bounds set by the corporate unity and the common interests of the lineage system. For it is only through his position in the lineage system that a Talǝŋ is able satisfactorily to secure his rights and perform his duties as a

[1] This would appear to be the case among the Ashanti (cf. R. S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, ch. viii) and the Jukun (cf. C. K. Meek, *A Sudanese Kingdom*, ch. ii), to cite only two widely separated examples.

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responsible member of his society. Of this we have had ample evidence.[1] Again, there are strong economic elements in the individual's adhesion to the lineage. There is the pressure due to the form and organization of Tale economy as a whole, which tends to restrict excessive mobility. As Tallensi themselves often put it, shrewdly picking on the key item in their productive cycle, it is all a question of manure, including human excrement. A home farm in one of the old settlements kept at a high level of fertility by continuous manuring is not light-heartedly abandoned.[2] This fact, and the scarcity of unutilized and unowned farmland in the old settlements, puts a premium on the right to inherit land in them. To-day, it is true, the pressure of these forces has been relaxed by the opening up of an easily accessible external labour market and of facilities for trade both in Taleland and with other areas. These extraneous outlets have made life easier for the natives but they have not, as we have observed before, materially altered their traditional mode of livelihood. In fact they serve to emphasize the contention of the natives that economic motives are of secondary consequence in maintaining lineage unity.

It is not joint interest in, and equal rights to the inheritance of, their patrimonial lands which alone hold a group of brothers together. Men who leave their natal settlements on account of land shortage do not return home eventually only because they have at last inherited their patrimonial lands. The decisive sanction, as we have shown in an earlier chapter, lies in the obligation of filial piety and what it stands for in terms of the jural and ritual functions of the lineage. The focus of unity for every lineage is the authority of the father, either the real authority of the living father or the mystical supremacy of the dead father or his surrogate, an ancestor spirit. Men like Yinworəb and Da'amo'o gave up wage labour in Kumasi very reluctantly to return home because the death of their fathers left them at the head of their respective joint families, and other similar cases have been quoted in an earlier chapter (p. 179). Similarly, a group of brothers may be scattered, some at home, some in a peripheral settlement, some in Mampurugu, some working abroad. On certain ritual occasions those who are near enough make a point of returning home. Family funerals, in particular, bring the scattered members of the family together. The three chief mourners at Tendaan Gieŋ's funeral were his brothers' sons Gikoo-Duun, who lived near Sameni in Mampurugu, Saanbuohba, who had been farming near Tola on the Red Volta for some years, and Baŋ-Duun who had been living at Biuŋ for nearly twenty years. They all

[1] In preceding chapters as well as in *Dynamics of Clanship*, *passim*.

[2] We have touched on this subject in our earlier book, chapters i and xi. It is more fully considered in C. W. Lynn's report, *Agriculture in North Mamprussi* (Dept. of Agriculture, Gold Coast, Bulletin 34, 1937), and in M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, IX, 1936.

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spoke of their ancestral home at Zubiuŋ as their 'real home (*ti yir ni yɛlmɛŋər*)' to which they would all return sooner or later. Two years later, in fact, both Saanbuohba and Baŋ-Duun did return to Zubiuŋ.

As these examples show, though the solidarity of siblings derives its psychological content from the fact of their growing up together, its validity as a norm of social relations among siblings is a function of the total field of lineage relations. In other words, whatever the personal relations of siblings may be, their indestructible social bonds spring from their common jural and ritual relationship to their parents; and 'sibling' in this context stands not only for individuals but for lineages, while 'parent' stands for any ancestor that may be relevant in a particular situation.

We must add that the friction which sibling rivalry between brothers occasionally gives rise to does not come to an end with their economic and residential separation. Self-interest among Tallensi provokes clashes of personality and of rights as much as anywhere else in the world. Tallensi say that the gravest disputes between brothers of the same nuclear lineage arise over land, though such disputes are very rare. Unlike the petty squabbles of day-to-day life, they are apt to end in blows and even bloodshed. I heard of several instances that had occurred during the previous thirty years, but only one came to my notice during my stay among the Tallensi. It was, however, a typical case. When Gunyam died, his sons Taagbin and Zaɣahkpɛmɔre inherited his lands and chattels, with Taagbin, the oldest son, as the senior heir. Taagbin allocated a portion of their late father's home farm to his younger brother. But the latter objected that he was being unfairly treated. The dispute ended in a fight in which Zaɣahkpɛmɔre was injured in the hand. Public opinion was severely critical of Zaɣahkpɛmɔre; for, as a Tale saying goes, an older brother who inherits his father's property and position is like one's father and should be treated with similar respect. But, as an elder of their section shrewdly pointed out when we were discussing this case, stupid as he is reputed to be, Zaɣahkpɛmɔre would never have raised his hand against Taagbin if the latter had been his proxy father and not his brother. Brothers quarrel just because they have equal rights in relation to one another.

There are two offences, however, which irrevocably disrupt the bonds of brotherhood if one brother commits either of them against another. As we have previously stated, it is a grave sin for a man to seduce the wife of a brother of the same inner or medial lineage. If this happens, the Tallensi say, the injured man and the culprit 'will never eat together again, will never sacrifice together again'. Because of this taboo a man may not sit on the same sleeping-mat as his brother's wife. 'It is as if he wanted to sleep with her', the natives say. Hence, also, it is considered to be improper for a man to address his brother's wife while he is alive as wife (*ɲɔɣa*), though he may speak of her to non-members

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593 generations ago the ancestor of this segment of Sagbarug yidɛm slew the
682 ancestor of a segment of Kuruug, hence the two units may not sacrifice
784 together. To do so would be to court the wrath of their collective ancestors.

593 Our analysis shows that what makes a rupture of the ties of brother-
578 hood, at any level of lineage organization, so grave a matter, is the fact
602 that it involves a rupture of the common filial relationship of the parties to a parent or ancestor. For it is from this relationship that the persons or units concerned derive their status of brotherhood relatively to one another.

593 In the preceding discussion we have spoken of brothers or siblings
602 sometimes in the primary sense of these terms, sometimes in the classificatory sense. That is exactly how the natives use the kinship terms for siblings; and the speech context by itself does not always indicate the exact genealogical degree of the relationship between the speaker and the person referred to. Like the terms used for parents and children, these kinship terms only have a strict connotation, implying specific sentiments, rights, and duties within the standard classificatory range. Within the inner lineage, or at the utmost, in lineages of narrow span, the medial lineage, a person described by the speaker as his sister (*tau*) or older brother (*bier*) or younger brother (*pit*) can be shown by genealogical reckoning to be of his or her generation by birth, even if he or she belongs to a totally different age stratum. Thus Badiwona, aged 6, describes Tiezien, aged about 70, as his older brother because they have a common patrilineal grandfather; and Zoobon-Tɔŋ-Tɔbɔg's children call their contemporaries, Kurug's children, brothers and sisters because they have a common patrilineal great-great-grandfather and belong to the same inner lineage. The pattern of conduct and sentiment we have been describing holds within this range, with the qualification that the solidarity of siblings tends to be shallower and their equality of less personal consequence the more distant their genealogical connexion within the inner lineage. But so close-knit is the inner lineage as a corporate unit in relation to wider corporate groupings that these differences of degree very often vanish altogether, except for the difference between *soog* and *sunzɔ* siblings.

593 As usual, it depends on the situation and on the kind of interests
602 involved. The situation steers conduct and sentiment; it is an infallible
●613 guide to the connotation of the kinship terms used in it. To take a few examples: A man may be nearly starving; he will be much more likely to receive a gift of grain from one of his matrilateral kinsmen than from a distant *sunzɔ* brother of the same inner lineage. Similarly, if a man is hard pressed in his farming programme, he will ask a uterine kinsman or an affinal kinsman to assist him and not a *sunzɔ* brother of the same inner lineage. These are personal problems and they are dealt with by invoking cognatic kinship ties. But in ritual and jural affairs it is the

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other way round. These involve not individual economic or social interests but the common interests of the lineage. If a man has to answer a charge of having abducted another man's wife, or meet a demand for the payment of bride-price or the surrender of the custody of a child, his 'brothers' and 'fathers' of the same inner lineage will rally round him unanimously. For marriage affairs (*pɔŋadir ycla*) involve the common interests of the whole lineage. The observer cannot deduce from the opinions or actions of any member of the inner lineage, in such a situation, whether he is the full (*soog*) brother or the paternal (*sunzɔ*) brother, or a more distant classificatory brother or father of the main actor.

The differences of degree in the solidarity of siblings is most apparent in residential, economic, and domestic arrangements. So if one asks a man whom he lives with and he replies 'I share a homestead with my older brother (*man ni m-bier la kab kpeerɔme*'—lit. 'I and my older brother enter together'), one can be certain that the older brother referred to is not more distantly related to him than a father's half-brother's son. But the term *bier* has a different connotation in marriage affairs. For instance, Yin's son's father-in-law came one day to see Yin about the payment of his daughter's bride-price. There was a long and at moments acrimonious argument, with the intermediary (*pɔŋasama*) acting as conciliator. At length Yin said: 'I agree to your terms; but of course I must first consult my older brothers (*biernam*).' Everybody understood that what Yin meant was that he should first have to obtain the formal consent of the elders of his inner lineage.

As we have learnt before, generation differences are not reckoned beyond the limits of the inner or at most medial lineage. Beyond this range, therefore, all clanswomen are called sisters (*tap*) and all clansmen who are one's contemporaries or one's own siblings' contemporaries are described as siblings. In relation to them the pattern of sentiment and conduct that holds between true siblings only comes into action *vis-à-vis* non-clansmen, and then in a very attenuated form. It is a question chiefly of united action and mutual loyalty in the service of the corporate interests of the maximal lineage or clan. So any man will come to the assistance of a clansman in an argument or fight with a man of another clan, irrespective of the rights or wrongs of the case. This is vividly seen in hunting or fishing battues. It is a very common thing for two or three men to lay claim to having killed an animal, especially if no arrow is found embedded in the animal's flesh. Then the clansmen of the claimants rally round them and their dispute turns into a violent altercation between two or three solid phalanxes of hunters. As we have previously narrated,[1] a famous war of the old days began in this way. Similarly, market brawls occasionally arise from a man's clansmen coming to his support in an argument. The commonest

[1] *Cf. Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. xiii.

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In ritual activities the social equivalence of siblings is constantly apparent, and in its most flexible form. For example, in almost every one of the elaborate series of rites that make up funeral ceremonies certain duties fall on particular kin of the dead person. A typical instance is the cooking of 'sisters-in-law porridge (*pɔyakiis sayabo*)', one of the inaugural rites of every funeral. Two 'wives' and a 'daughter' of the clan together cook porridge in a prescribed ritual fashion. Usually the rite is performed by daughters and wives of the inner lineage that is celebrating the funeral, but any daughter of the clan and any wife of the clan can serve. The rite ends with a 'sister's son (*ahɔŋ*)' pretending to whip the women who cook the porridge with a twig. As there is not always a true sister's son present, a member of the clan has to act instead. There is never any difficulty in finding somebody who is qualified to do so. By going back far enough almost anybody can trace a matrilateral link with his own clan and can therefore act as a 'sister's son' for the purpose of the rite. Thus at Sayawuob's mother's funeral Latarɔg acted as 'sister's son'. His father's mother's mother had been a daughter of the clan section to which Sayawuob belongs and that made him a classificatory 'sister's son' for purposes of this rite. A double identification lies behind such assimilations of remote to near kin. There is the lateral identification of any daughter of the clan with any other daughter of the clan, living or dead; and there is the vertical identification of a person with any of his ancestors in certain situations.

A somewhat different illustration is the following. We have seen, in our earlier book,[1] how the genealogical equality ('but for the accident of birth') of women members of the lineage and clan with their brothers is recognized both in secular and in ritual custom. Among all the daughters of a lineage—from the minimal to the maximal span, as it emerges in a particular context—the oldest of them, the *pɔyayabɔlɔg-kpeŋ*, has special prestige. She stands for the genealogical equality of women and men in the lineage. She has a kind of honorary equality with the male head of the lineage. She has no authority in lineage affairs; but if she happens to be present when they are being discussed she may speak her mind freely and will be listened to with respect. In the case of the senior daughter of a medial or lesser lineage, she has the right to be informed in advance of every important ceremonial event in the lineage. If she attends, she is entitled to a special portion of the sacrificial meat usually allocated to the daughters—the backbone, upper ribs, and intestines. But there is a curious custom which shows her symbolic equivalence with her brother, the lineage head, best. She may never sleep under the same roof with him, even if he is her own full brother. If she did, one of them would die. There is a feeling that in the eyes of the ancestors the oldest male and oldest woman of a lineage are so nearly equivalent that the latter could easily replace the

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 52 and ch. ix.

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former. The taboo emphasizes the superiority of the male members in spite of genealogical equivalence. There is an obverse to this taboo. The token funeral performed for a woman by her father's people, after her real funeral at her husband's home, is made for a *pɔŋayabɔlɛg-kpɛŋ* not by her own father's heirs but by the head of the inner or medial or even maximal lineage, her status-brother, so to speak. Tallensi say she belongs to the whole lineage not to her paternal family.

To revert to the levirate, the fundamental rule is that a man's widow may be inherited only by a 'brother' or a 'grandson' in his own clan or a linked clan, or by a 'sister's son' in an unrelated clan. The two principles involved are those of the equivalence of siblings and of the equivalence of alternate generations. A 'sister's son's' leviratic rights go back to the notion that his 'mother' might have been a man and a 'brother' of the dead man. He is exercising the rights that might have been his 'mother's'; hence this, too, is a recognition of the equivalence of siblings. What is absolutely prohibited is to inherit the widow of a 'son' or a 'father'.

In theory, as we know, these rights extend to 'brothers', 'grandsons', and 'sisters' sons' in the widest connotation of these terms. Joint leviratic rights is one of the critical norms of clanship,[1] implying that all men of the clan are 'brothers'. In practice these rights are neither absolute, nor are they equal for all men who are ostensibly entitled to them. Various factors enter into the picture, but the most important are the widow's preferences and the genealogical distance between her dead husband and whoever is seeking her hand. The strongest efforts are made to prevent a widow of child-bearing age from remarrying out of the nuclear, or at most inner, lineage of her late husband. His full and half-brothers have the strongest claim to the widow. This is based not only on the argument of genealogical proximity but on what this implies. They have contributed by their labour to the bride-price that was paid for her, and if she marries a distant clansman of theirs they lose the returns on this that children represent; for a man marrying a distant clan-brother's widow need not, in theory, refund the bride-price the latter's nuclear lineage gave for her. Actually a refund of the bride-price is often demanded in such cases and usually paid to avoid ill-feeling between the two inner lineages concerned. In addition, full and half-brothers are the dead man's coheirs. They take possession of the patrimonial property he administered during his lifetime. They accept responsibility for his debts and assume the custody of his children. For all these acts the Tallensi use the concept *vaa* (to inherit or succeed to). So they say a man *vaa* (inherits) his late brother's land, livestock, and children; and it is just, therefore, that he should also inherit his privileges and rights, especially in the matter of his widow. As brothers of the same nuclear lineage are coheirs of their patrimonial

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 41.

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property it is good enough if she marries any one of them. In practice, a widow of child-bearing age who has children by her late husband usually consents to remarry one of his close brothers.

Next to a brother of the nuclear lineage, a brother of the late husband's inner lineage is considered to have a strong claim to his widow's hand. If a man dies leaving two widows of child-bearing age it is considered proper for one of them to be given to a member of her late husband's nuclear lineage and for the other to go to another nuclear segment of the same inner lineage. If a widow appears to be unwilling to marry her late husband's half-brother, for example, and is prepared to marry one of his 'brothers' of the same inner lineage, she is usually allowed to do so by the head of her husband's nuclear lineage. The new husband is still spoken of as having inherited the widow. In every case that came under my notice widows of child-bearing age married into their late husband's inner lineage if they had young children. But in a few cases, amounting to about three out of ten, these second marriages broke down after a time. Childless young widows often prefer to go back to their parental home and try their luck again on the marriage market.

Beyond the range of the inner lineage a 'brother' of the dead man has only the rights of a clansman. If the widow is of child-bearing age he will have to be very circumspect in courting her; for he can only marry her if she chooses him in preference to other claimants, and this means she must be courted. Hence it is more usual to speak of 'marrying' (*di*) a widow than of 'inheriting' (*vaa*) her in such cases. But it would be a very bold woman who, left a widow while still capable of bearing children, rejected a husband's brother of the same inner lineage in favour of a clansman of his. Only in exceptional cases would such an action not create ill feeling between the two clan segments concerned. Such an exceptional case occurred when Baroog died leaving nine widows. His father tried hard to persuade several distant clansmen of his to seek the widows in marriage. The reason was that Baroog had no adult brothers in his nuclear lineage and so few in his inner lineage that they would not be able to inherit all the widows. For few men wish to inherit more than one widow at a time. Rather than let them return to their fathers and be sought in marriage by men of other clans, Baroog's father preferred to see them marry distant clansmen of his.

Widows beyond the age of child-bearing have complete freedom of choice in selecting a new husband from among their late husband's clansmen. Often such marriages are merely nominal. The woman continues to live with a grown-up son and her new husband comes to visit her occasionally and sends her a little grain now and then. If the widow has no adult son she will live with her new husband, adding to the labour power of his household and to its indirect sources of income through the gifts she obtains from her patrilineal kin, for example, or any private property of her own, such as a couple of sheep or goats.

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on the charity of his kinsmen and friends. The Gbizug Tendaana refused to promise anything in advance. When at length Puvəlimra succeeded in persuading his prospective father-in-law to give him the girl, all the formalities were carried out by his paternal relatives at Kpatia. Then came the question of bride-price. The demand was made to the head of Puvəlimra's inner lineage at Kpatia, who transmitted it to Puvəlimra himself, since his 'father' was obviously unable to meet it. It was then that the Gbizug Tendaana made Puvəlimra a present of a bull, without, however, assuming any responsibility for handing it over to Puvəlimra's father-in-law. The situation was saved for the time being; but that dry season Puvəlimra went, for the first time in his life, to seek work abroad, hoping thus to earn enough to buy another bull to give to his in-laws.

Sometimes, however, a mother's brother accepts responsibility for the bride-price of the wife of his sister's son who has grown up as his foster-son. A curious situation arises then. For this amounts to adopting the *ahəŋ* into the inner lineage of the *ahəb*. It is as if his mother's bride-price is paid back to his paternal lineage so that he becomes a son of his mother's brother's lineage—much like an illegitimate son. And this is symbolically shown by his children being entrusted to the care of spirit guardians from among his mother's brother's ancestors instead of his paternal ancestors. Though he does not acquire rights of inheritance in his adoptive lineage, the *ahəŋ* settles permanently in the clan settlement of his *ahəb*. He retains only ritual ties with his paternal clan. This is one of the ways in which accessory lineages are founded in clans to which they are related as *ahəŋ* to *ahəb*. At Gbeog, for instance, there are two homesteads occupied by the sons and grandsons of a Gorogo man who came to live with his mother's brother and settled there when the latter paid the bride-price for his first wife. In ritual matters these men still belong to Gorogo. They keep the totemic taboos and funeral customs of Gorogo. When there is a death in their families their Gorogo clansmen come to bury the dead and celebrate the funeral. When the Great Festivals arrive they join with their Gorogo clansmen in celebrating them. But in another two or three generations it is quite possible that their lineage will become an established accessory lineage of Gbeog.

The corollary to the foregoing is that a person's patrilineal kin do not forfeit their rights over him merely because he has grown up in the care of his mother's brother. These rights are often jealously guarded. For example, Nabil, a lad who lived with his mother's brother, one day killed a hare. Instead of delivering the carcass to the head of his own nuclear lineage, as he was bound to do by custom, he brought it home to his *ahəb*. The latter divided the bulk of it amongst the constituent segments of his own inner lineage and sent only one hind-leg to Nabil's 'father'. His reaction was an indignant protest, backed by the other

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members of his inner lineage, at what he called the deliberate flouting of his rights as *biiraan*, owner of the child. A long squabble between the two lineages followed which eventually petered out in a compromise. This may seem a storm in a teacup; it was taken very seriously by a dozen Tale elders.

The outstanding example of the retention of patrilineal rights is found in the case of a girl who grows up at her *ahəb yiri*. Whatever her personal relations with her father's lineage may be, it is they who receive the placation gifts and the bride-price when she marries. The *ahəb*'s share is only the 'cow of rearing'.

Cases of girls living as foster children at their *ahəb yiri* up to marriageable age are uncommon. I knew of only one girl who was living with her *ahəb* and would probably not be taken back by her father's people before she reached marriageable age. A girl living with her mother's brother is usually there because she was sent to her maternal grandmother in early childhood owing to the death of her mother. She may be left there until she is 11 or 12, but she is then generally fetched by her father's people. A boy has more freedom. He cannot be forced to return to his paternal home if he does not wish to do so.

An interesting reflection of the conventional ideas on the relations of an *ahəb* and his foster *ahəŋ* is found in the story commonly told of how certain politico-ritual offices came to be transferred from one clan to another. The tale is so stereotyped that it can be regarded as a standard myth. It is alleged of several of the lesser chiefships that they were originally vested in different clans from those that now hold them—usually clans that are closely related to the present holders by local or ritual ties. The last chief of the original line, the myth relates, had his sister's son, a member of the clan now holding the chiefship, living with him. The chief put great trust in his *ahəŋ*; and, either because he had no sons or because his sons were indifferent to politico-ritual affairs, the chief always delegated his *ahəŋ* to represent him. Thus, he used to send the *ahəŋ* as his messenger whenever he had to communicate with the senior chief who was the elector to that chiefship. In this way the *ahəŋ* became known to the elector. When his *ahəb* died he hastened stealthily to the elector with the news, taking lavish gifts along with him. Knowing him so well from their previous contacts and persuaded by the rich gifts he brought, the elector thereupon immediately conferred the chiefship on him. Thus the chiefship came into the possession of its present holders. A similar story is told to explain the dominant position of the lineage of Lakum yiri in the politico-ritual structure of Ba'ari, in spite of their being an attached lineage.[1]

When it is pointed out that such actions are contrary to custom and would not be allowed at present, the natives have two answers. Firstly, they say, unscrupulous people never hesitate to break a customary rule

[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 88.

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for him by the lineage of the ancestress who has demanded the erection of the shrine. The diviner-to-be is himself a 'sister's son (*ahəŋ*)' or 'grandson (*yaaŋ*)' of the men who come to perform the ceremony of establishing the shrine. But in addition, a member of his clan who is also an *ahəŋ* of the visitors' clan is deputed to act as intermediary. He goes out to meet the visitors when they approach and escorts them to the homestead of the diviner-to-be; and he acts as spokesman for the latter throughout the ceremony. Thus he formally 'shows' (*paal*) the visitors the beer and the fowls and the goat that have been provided for the ceremony and acts as mediator if there is a disagreement about the amount or quality of these provisions. In the ritual situations that make up the ceremony the visitors sit together in a group and the diviner-to-be and his clansmen sit together in a group. Between the two groups sits the selected *ahəŋ*. As is customary in all such situations, the two parties do not address one another directly. They address the intermediary, who 'passes on (*saŋ ti*)' what was said to the other party.

Similarly, if a dispute occurs between segments of different clans, for instance over the abduction of a wife, the injured group might send one of their members who is a 'sister's son' of the abductor's clan, with a message of protest and a demand for the return of the wife. An *ahəŋ* is the appropriate person to act as go-between in negotiations between different clans. In the system of clanship ties, it will be remembered, intercalary lineages are sometimes credited with being the agnates of one clan and the 'sister's sons' of the other.[1]

As has been suggested, Tallensi maintain that an *ahəŋ* acting as an intermediary in inter-clan transactions is bound to be equally faithful to both parties. This does not mean that an *ahəŋ* is always equally loyal in sentiment to both his patrilineal and his matrilateral—especially his immediate maternal—kin. Tallensi say that when there is a clash of interests a man will always side with his patrilineal kin while endeavouring, if possible, to refrain from bringing harm on his maternal kin. The behaviour of an *ahəŋ* in war between his and his mother's brother's clan is a case in point.

But there is a belief which suggests that the loyalty of an *ahəŋ* to his mother's brother's lineage may, in some circumstances, outweigh his loyalty to his own clan. In the old days of warfare, it is said, if a man was killed in fighting, there was a way of taking vengeance on the slayer by means of sorcery. The arrow that slew the victim was extracted, and the clan and lineage of the slayer were ascertained. This was easy. Every inner or medial lineage of a clan usually has a distinctive mark (*daan*). One lineage, for example, may tie a tiny guinea-fowl feather at the base of the arrow-head, another may use a particular species of grass. By inquiring from their sororal kinsmen in the enemy clan the victim's lineage brothers soon discovered which lineage the slayer

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 44 ff.

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604 belonged to and who he was. The method of sorcery was to dip this
613 'evil arrow (*peembier*)' secretly into some food or drink the slayer was
754 about to take. If this was done he would die. The problem then was to find someone who would carry out this task. It could not be done by any of the victim's clansmen since it required intimate contact with the slayer's family.

578 If there was a daughter of the victim's clan, or better still, inner
604 lineage married to a member of the slayer's inner lineage, she might be
613 persuaded to do it. Such an action would be a grave sin, for which the
754 woman's husband's ancestors would punish her with death. But sometimes women hate their husbands so much in their hearts, Tallensi say, that they will risk anything to injure them and their clan. And if the dead man was a close agnate of the woman, she might put vengeance for his death above her duty to her husband's clan. Alternatively, an *ahəŋ* of the victim's inner lineage or clan, who is a member of the slayer's inner lineage or clan, might be persuaded to undertake the commission. Only a man who had a deep grudge against the slayer would undertake so wicked an action for which the clan ancestors would certainly punish him with death. But enmity between clansmen, even between brothers of the same inner lineage, is not unknown; and as Tallensi often assert, the belief that the ancestors may punish an action with death does not always restrain an unscrupulous man. Whether or not this act of sorcery was ever carried out I cannot tell. It is impossible to obtain verifiable information on a point of this sort. But what is of interest is the belief itself. Assuming that it is founded on fantasy, it still suggests that the loyalties of an *ahəŋ* are felt to be more evenly divided than is conventionally admitted.

604 There is other evidence for this view. The Gəlibdaana of Tenzugu
578 earned the hostility of most of the maximal lineage and clan heads of the Tongo district by his high-handed drive to aggrandize himself.[1] In public his opponents had the support of practically all their clan or lineage elders. But amongst them there were, in every clan, one or two private sympathizers of the Gəlibdaana. The usual explanation was that these men were 'sisters' sons' or 'grandsons' of his inner lineage or clan. One of the Chief of Tongo's most trusted and devoted elders used to visit the Gəlibdaana regularly. Another elder of the chief pointed out to me, in explanation, that the first was an *ahəŋ* of the Gəlibdaana's inner lineage. He quoted several other men who were *ahəs* of the Gəlibdaana's inner lineage and maintained close contact with him. It was through them, he added, that the Gəlibdaana kept himself so well informed of everything that happened at Tongo, even of matters that should not be known outside the chief's family. He admitted that the Chief of Tongo probably had similar contacts with the Gəlibdaana's faction and kept himself informed of the Gəlibdaana's activities in the same way.

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 251 ff.

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604 764 571 funerals, comes because of the social importance of the occasion. The funeral of a section or maximal lineage head is of exceptional public interest. It marks the end of a phase of lineage history and the beginning of a new phase, involving realinements in the social relations of many people and probably of all segments of the clan. That is why every branch of the dead man's clan, representatives of related clans, and many matrilateral and sororal kinsmen come to take part in the funeral.

63 571 602 782 For similar reasons the ceremony by which the *bɔyar* of a lineage of a high order, such as a medial lineage or a maximal lineage, is formally taken over—'inherited (*vaa*)', as the natives put it—by a new lineage head is also attended by many 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the lineage and the clan. This ceremony marks the re-establishment of the structural equilibrium of the lineage around a new lineage head after its temporary disturbance by the death of the previous lineage head. It is an event of special importance for reaffirming the bonds of lineage solidarity and of kinship amity—for renewing, in the presence of their founding ancestors, the covenants of clanship and of kinship. All the males of the lineage, including the small boys, and representatives of all the other segments of the clan attend; and extra-clan kinsfolk from far and wide are present. I have counted as many as thirty, ranging from the full sister's son of the new lineage head to a distant 'sister's son', whose matrilateral ties with the clan went back to the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage, at such a gathering. Though it is a festive occasion, the attraction of food and drink is unquestionably of minor significance. Only two or three sheep, at most, are sacrificed, in addition to a large number of fowls; but every adult who attends is expected to bring a fowl to be offered to the *bɔyar* on his behalf. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' take special pride in offering their fowls, for this is the essence of the sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, suffusing the most solemn moments of the sacrifice itself.

793 602 It is very much the same with the installation ceremonies of a newly appointed tendaana or other holder of a politico-ritual office. Extra-clan kin, clansmen, representatives of linked clans and of ritually associated clans, all come in great numbers to the ceremonies, bringing fowls, dishes of cooked food, baskets of grain and of ground-nuts, and other voluntary gifts to congratulate the new chief or tendaana and to testify to their kinship bonds with him and his clan. These ceremonies are, in effect, simply an elaboration of the ceremony of 'inheriting' a lineage *bɔyar*. Their significance is the same, but in a heightened degree, corresponding with the wider social sphere to which they refer. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' closely related to the new chief or tendaana are as proud of his elevation in status as are his close agnates.

604 769 778 This is one aspect of a man's ritual relations with his 'sisters' sons'

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will henceforth bring blessings upon him, too, from time to time. And if he becomes a diviner the erstwhile persecutrix becomes his benefactress. The *bakologo* becomes a source of income instead of a standing menace.

As has been mentioned before, a divining shrine is set up for the man it has 'reached (*paa*)' by his matrilateral lineage from which the dominant ancestress of the complex came. For example, Pal-Zɔŋ's *bakologo* ancestors consisted of his father, paternal grandfather and great-grandfather, and the latter's mother, who was the dominant figure of the group. She had been a daughter of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's maximal lineage. Zɔŋ, therefore, had to go to the present head of this maximal lineage to arrange for the setting up of his *bakologo* shrine. Taking a fowl, a guinea-fowl, a basket of grain, and a pot of beer, Zɔŋ went to the Gbambee Tɛndaana to lay his request before him. The tɛndaana sacrificed the two birds to his lineage shrine (*bɔɣar*) on Zɔŋ's behalf, explaining in his invocation to his ancestors the occasion that had brought their *ahɔŋ* to plead with them. He ended with the customary exhortation to the ancestors that they should bless the setting up of the new *bakologo* shrine, assist Zɔŋ to become a successful diviner, and grant him prosperity, children, and health. He finally 'scooped' (*fiŋ*) the lineage *bɔɣar* for Zɔŋ. That is to say, he put a little of the sediment accumulated at the bottom of the pot, which is the most important part of the paraphernalia of a *bɔɣar*, into a tiny pot for Zɔŋ to take home to add to his new *bakologo* shrine. In this way the direct continuity of the new *bakologo* shrine with the matrilateral lineage *bɔɣar* is tangibly symbolized.

Next evening a party from Gbambee arrived at Zɔŋ's homestead to perform the ceremony of actually setting up the new shrine. The party consisted of the Gbambee Tɛndaana's own son, representing his father, and several other members of his maximal lineage; for though the immediate responsibility for the ceremony falls on the head of the lineage, the whole lineage is concerned in this ritual service to their *ahɔŋ*. At Zɔŋ's house they found a number of members of his inner lineage and clan as well as three *ahɔs* of Zɔŋ's inner lineage. The ceremony lasted all night. The details are not relevant here, and it need only be said that it consists of a series of ritual episodes with interludes of conviviality and hilarity. It is one of the paradoxes of the *bakologo* complex that the setting up of a divining shrine is one of the least solemn of Tale ceremonies.

The ancestors associated with Zɔŋ's *bakologo* comprised a fairly simple combination. Naabdiya's *bakologo* ancestors consisted of his mother's father, *his* mother, and *her* mother. It was the clansmen of the last who came to set up the shrine for their 'grandson' (*yaaŋ*) Naabdiya. To reach them Naabdiya had first to go to his mother's brother's people; they escorted him to his maternal grandfather's mother's brother's

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602 769 778 could not have been less than 80 years old. This tree was the centre of the communal life of the neighbourhood. It was, as every native would automatically expect, also an important ancestor shrine. A few years after it sprouted Tiezien's paternal grandfather discovered through a diviner that his mother's father and *his* mother, a Pusunamoo woman, had chosen the baobab as their shrine. The Pusunamoo woman's maximal lineage consecrated it for Tiezien's grandfather. Thereafter sacrifices were regularly offered on the tree. In due course Tiezien succeeded to [164] the custody of this shrine. Then came the influenza epidemic of 1918. Many people died at Kpata'ar, including members of Tiezien's inner lineage and wives and children of the lineage. A diviner revealed that these deaths were being inflicted by the Pusunamoo ancestress in retaliation for long neglect. She demanded that Tiezien should collect a large number of fowls from all the members of his inner lineage and take them to Pusunamoo to be sacrificed to the lineage *bɔyar* of her medial lineage as an atonement. This was Tiezien's first and last contact with his matrilateral kin at Pusunamoo up to 1936.

602 It is evident, from these examples, as has been previously suggested, that the majority of a man's remote matrilateral kin are not socially relevant for him. All, however, are potentially so and may become so at some time or another; and when they do enter his field of social relations it is chiefly in their ritual capacity.

602 778 769 We said that the most important ancestor shrines linking a man to a matrilateral lineage are *bakologo* and *bɔyar* shrines. Of the two the *bɔyar* shrine is, in fact, the more important. As we have shown in our earlier book,[1] the ancestor cult of the Tallensi culminates in the conception and cult of the *bɔyar*. This notion and the cult that expresses it form the centre of gravity of the lineage system. Hence it seems strange, at first sight, to find that every *bɔyar* must necessarily be derived from a matrilateral lineage. We can understand this, however, if we consider the significance of the *bɔyar* in the lineage system.

602 778 769 613 A *bɔyar* is the shrine consecrated to the founding ancestor of a lineage and his mother. It symbolizes the identity of that lineage and its differentiation from other lineages of the same order within a more inclusive lineage or within a clan. A lineage expands by a process of internal segmentation and differentiation that follows the lines of cleavage inherent in the structure of the joint family.[2] The component segments of a lineage are differentiated from one another primarily by reference to their descent from different 'mothers'—that is different wives of their common founding ancestor. But a woman does not sever her ties with her lineage when she marries and becomes a mother; and in kinship questions Tale thought is dominated by the lineage concept. Hence Tallensi think of a lineage progenitrix not only as such-and-such a

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 137.
[2] Ibid. ch. xii.

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named person but also, and chiefly, as a member of such-and-such a clan and lineage. When Tallensi discuss the internal structure of a maximal lineage what they emphasize is the clan and lineage origin of the several 'mothers' of its segments.

When a new segment begins to crystallize out in any lineage, it requires a *bɔyar* of its own to symbolize its identity. And since its genealogical distinctness comes from its progenitrix, its *bɔyar* must come from her lineage. This is simply a consequence of the fact that the notion of the *bɔyar* is a ritual conceptualization and sanction of the singularity, as well as of the unity and the continuity of the lineage. A new lineage segment can only arise, among the Tallensi, by derivation from an existing lineage. It is, one might say, a rearrangement within the existing social system, and does not represent a breach of continuity. The *bɔyar* symboiizing it is, similarly, an offshoot and replica of an existing *bɔyar*. To put this in another way, a person's status (i.e. the sum total of his rights and duties in relation to Tale society at large and to all the other members of the society) is at bottom determined by his or her descent, as we have previously shown. When he becomes an ancestor spirit his mystical attributes and powers are not absolutely autonomous arising solely from the fact that he begot sons and then died. Whatever their real psychological roots may be, in Tale religious thought these attributes and powers belong to an ancestor spirit because when he died he 'went to join his forefathers (*kyɛŋ paag u banam*)' and because he represents his whole line of ancestors in a particular situation or context. Hence every ancestor shrine either is or in course of time becomes the altar for a group of lineally related ancestors and ancestresses, never for one ancestor alone. A shrine consecrated to a particular ancestor is *ipso facto* consecrated to his agnatic descendants that come between him and the owner of the shrine. Sacrifice is offered and prayer addressed to the whole sequence of ancestors, in order of ascent; for the more remote ancestor can only be approached through the less remote. This principle is well illustrated in the examples of *bakologo* complexes quoted earlier. It applies to both patrilineal and matrilateral ancestors. Even when a man sacrifices to his own father's or mother's spirit he invokes them to 'attend with all their forefathers (*ba dɔl ni ba banam waabi*)'. Conversely, when an ancestor intervenes in his descendant's life he can only do so through the medium of those who came between him and his descendant.

It would take us too far afield to discuss all the evidence of the significance of this principle in Tale religion. One more item must suffice. According to Tale thought, an unnatural death is one that is shown by divination *not* to have been mystically caused by the ancestors. The physical cause of the death makes no difference to the issue. A person may die of old age; if none of his ancestors claim to have caused his death, this is a sign that he was not 'human (*ninvoo*)'—that is a full social being. He was a disguised bush-sprite. He is not given human burial,

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he does not join his forefathers, he does not become an ancestor spirit. This shows that it is not the fact of death that turns a person into an ancestor spirit but the fact that, as Tallensi believe, he is summoned (*buol*) by his ancestors and goes to join them.

Thus when a lineage progenitrix becomes an ancestor spirit, she does so as the bearer of mystical powers and attributes that reside in the collective body of her lineage ancestors, symbolized and made accessible to man in their lineage *bɔɣar*. Looked at in this way, too, the *bɔɣar* consecrated to her and her son must be an offshoot of her lineage *bɔɣar*.[1]

In addition, there is the obvious point that a segment of a lineage cannot symbolize its distinctness by means of a *bɔɣar* derived from their own lineage *bɔɣar*, which is the symbol of the genealogical and social unity of the lineage, not of its internal differentiation. The lineage *bɔɣar*, as is evident, is the most esoteric symbol of the principle that runs right through Tale social structure, that social differentiation within the lineage framework springs from maternal origin. This principle operates in lineage structure;[2] and we have seen how, at the other end of the scale, it constitutes the springboard of individual differentiation in the structure of the joint family.[3] This is a further instance of the consistency of Tale social structure at all levels conferred upon it by the kinship system.

A new segment of a lineage begins to crystallize out as a recognized corporate unit in the time of its founding ancestor's grandsons. For it is not until then that the process of fission in the lineage has gone far enough to separate his grandchildren and his brothers' grandchildren into distinct nuclear lineages. Thus it is a man's grandson or great-grandson who sets up a *bɔɣar* consecrated to him and his mother. According to the idiom of Tale religious thought, the ancestor demands that a *bɔɣar* be set up for him and his mother. A day is appointed for the ceremony, and all the descendants of the progenitrix, through both males and females, are informed. In the morning or early afternoon the head of the new segment takes a fowl, a goat or sheep, and a pot of beer to the head of his grandmother's inner lineage, or in some clans, medial lineage. The men of that lineage assemble so that all of its branches are represented and the animals are sacrificed to the lineage *bɔɣar* on behalf of the *ahəŋ*. Then the *bɔɣar* is 'scooped' for him, in the same way as was described in the case of the diviner's shrine. The *ahəŋ* goes straight

[1] In theory, obviously, the only lineage *bɔɣar* that need not be derived from another *bɔɣar* is the *bɔɣar* of a maximal lineage. Actually most maximal lineage *bɔɣa* conform to the pattern we have described. The only truly sovereign *bɔɣa*—i.e. *bɔɣa* not derived from other *bɔɣa*—are the External *Bɔɣa* of the Talis and their congeners. And it is significant that the component maximal lineages of these clans generally have two *bɔɣa*, one the domestic representative of the External *Bɔɣar*, the other a distinctive *bɔɣar* derived from their founder's mother's lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. vii.

[2] Ibid., ch. xii.

[3] *Supra*, Ch. III.

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home, where in the meantime the other members, both men and women, of the new segment and the 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the segment who have been able to come have gathered. The head of the new segment arrives, followed, as the Tallensi think, by the spirits of his grandmother's ancestors. He now performs the sacrifices by which the new *bɔŋar* is consecrated. He himself offers a sheep. All the other male members of the new segment bring a fowl each to be sacrificed on their behalf and *ahɔs* and *yaas* all do so too. A large pot or earthenware dish, inside which the small pot containing the sediment 'scooped' from the grandmother's lineage *bɔŋar* pot is placed, forms the altar. Henceforth this will be the *bɔŋar* of the new lineage segment; and there will be a similar communion rite embracing all the descendants of the founding ancestor and his mother whenever the *bɔŋar* is inherited by a new lineage head.[1]

We have now considered the most important ritual services matrilateral kin render to their sororal kin. The ritual services rendered by sororal kin to matrilateral kin are, as might be expected, of far less consequence. In funeral ceremonies, for example, there are a number of rites in which it is necessary to have the participation of an *ahɔŋ* of the deceased. The rite of cooking 'the porridge of sisters-in-law (*pɔŋakiis sayabo*)', which has been previously mentioned, is typical of these rites; and it is typical of them, also, that anybody who can, by any stretch of the term, be described as *ahɔŋ* can serve in them. All these rites express the fact that a person's death is of concern to his or her sororal kin as well as to his or her patrilineal kin, and affects the field of social relations of the former as well as that of the latter. Hence in all funeral rites a special portion of the meat, cooked food, and beer used is allocated to the 'sisters' children', whether few or many are present. Matrilateral and sororal kin do not, however, undergo mourning rites.

Apart from funerals, there are one or two other special ceremonies in which the services of an *ahɔŋ* are needed. Thus in the ceremony of exorcising an evil Predestiny (*Yinbe'er*) an *ahɔŋ* is required to perform the final act of sympathetic magic. This consists in collecting the magical paraphernalia used in the ceremony—all of which symbolize the wish that the evil Predestiny may depart and conceal itself for ever—and throwing them away in some barren spot. A 'sister's son' is called upon

[1] There is a point of religious doctrine that cannot be fully discussed here but must be mentioned to avoid confusion. Every important ancestor shrine is a means of making a whole line of ancestors accessible to its possessor. Now the collective mystical power of a patrilineal line of ancestors reposes in the lineage *bɔŋar*. Hence every important shrine has to be linked up with the lineage *bɔŋar* of the dominant spirit to which it is consecrated. That is why when a *bakologo* is set up, the *bɔŋar* of the matrilateral lineage from which it is derived is 'scooped' for inclusion in the new shrine. Broadly speaking, the ritual validity of every ancestor shrine goes back to a *bɔŋar*. But the setting up of a new lineage *bɔŋar* is a very special ritual landmark.